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THE OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE



PETER OLAFSON



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# THUNDERSCAPE

*The Official Strategy Guide*

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# THUNDERSCAPE

## *The Official Strategy Guide*

Peter Olafson

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# Dedication

To my parents

# Acknowledgments

My sincere thanks to project editor Daniel Francisco for his vinegar-free management style; to copy editor Rachel Fong for an inquiring mind that always wanted to know; to designer Carl Yoshihara for his lively design; to associate acquisitions editor Juliana Aldous and publisher Roger Stewart for the opportunity; to the whole Thunderscape crew at SSI, especially associate producer Jeff Shotwell and scripter Adam Isgreen, for a wealth of detail on the game's internal workings; and to my wife, Evelyn, for her patience with my late nights and chores left undone.

Peter Olafson



## *The Incubator*

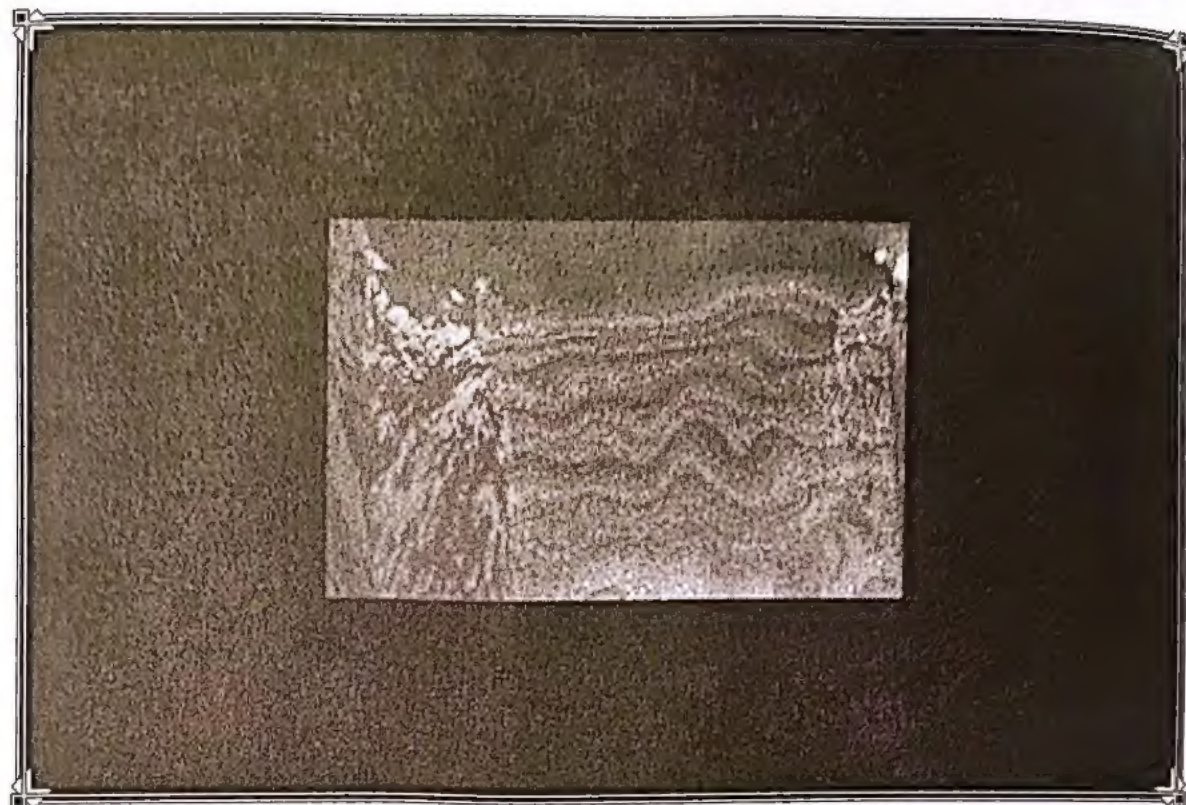
Hey, who turned out the lights!

Dark and savage creatures called Nocturnals, newly organized by an unknown mastermind, have seized control of the two fortresses that control Skelon's Shield—a magical blue tapestry (Figures 1-1 and 1-2) that protects the road into the peaceful Northlands.

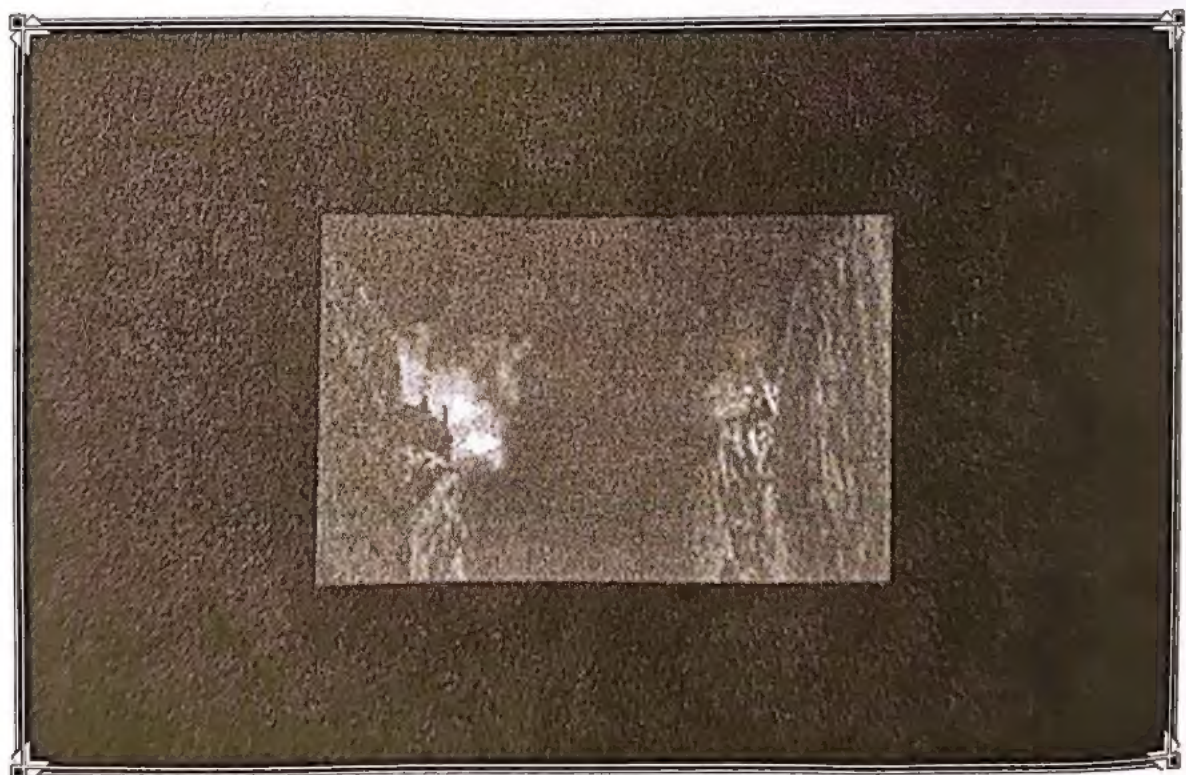




**Figure 1-1.**  
This is Skelon's  
Shield.

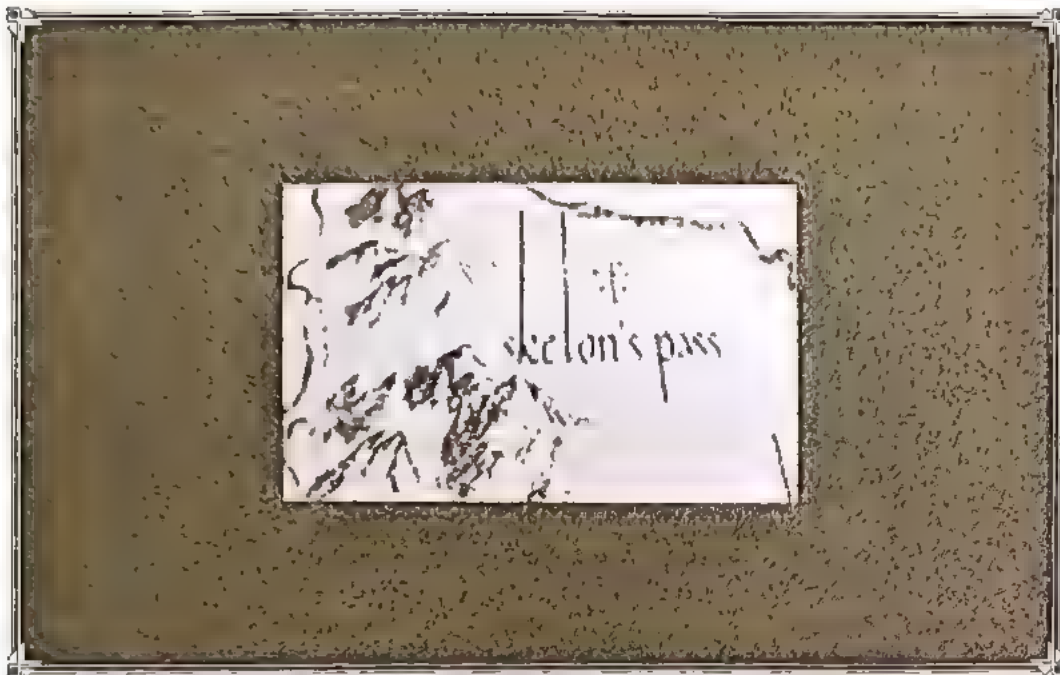


**Figure 1-2.**  
Oops, it was  
Skelon's Shield.



Darkness has flooded the region as the shield's power is twisted to evil purposes. A Nocturnal army is marching toward Skelon's Pass (Figure 1-3). If it reaches the Northlands, there will be nothing to stop them, and life as you know it will end in blood and flame. Someone has to restore the shield, and that someone is your little band.





**Figure 1-3.**  
Skelon's Pass

Hmmm. This might be just the time to take that vacation you've been planning ...

Sorry, you can't be spared. Aden needs you. In *Thunderscape*, you control four knights of the Radiant Order—and a range of allies met en route—who have been assigned this dangerous task. Your path lies almost entirely underground. Starting at a dock in Skelon's Gorge with rudimentary equipment, you make your way up through the mountains to Vanguard Keep and then under them to the Radiant Citadel. Along the way, you'll explore a vast game world ruled by "mechamagic"—a hybrid of swords and sorcery and the industrial revolution.

The story proper gets under way in Chapter Two. In this chapter, I'll deal with some general issues of gameplay that will help you prepare and improve your party and smooth the bumpy road into the depths.

## Building Character

If you're going to create your own characters, use the "Detailed" mode (Figure 1-4). The "Quick" mode, while very handy, doesn't have the same level of control, and may well wind up burdening your party with talents it is not likely not use.

**Figure 1-4.**

Assign stat points to make the most of a character's natural gifts.



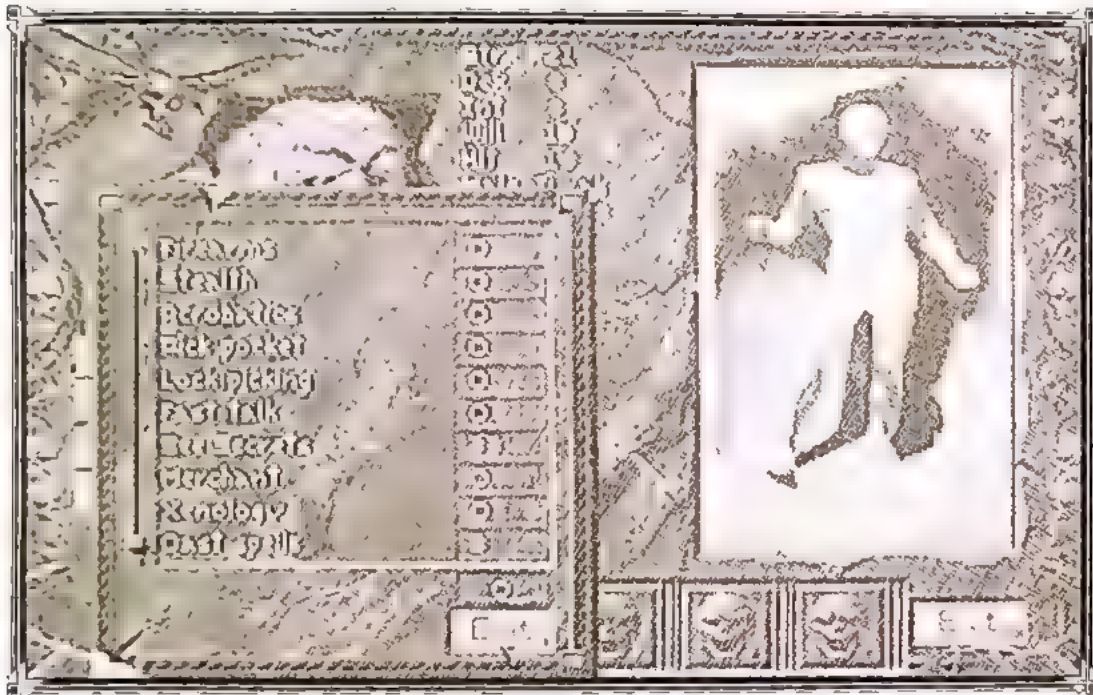
The chart below provides base stats by race, before the 25 stat points are assigned. (As much as nine points can be added to any stat.)

Race	Str	Dex	Int	Will	Hlt
Dwarf	11	8	9	10	11
Elf	8	11	11	10	9
Faerkin	6	12	9	11	11
Ferran	11	10	8	9	11
Goreaux	7	10	11	11	10
Human	10	9	10	10	10
Jurak	12	8	8	10	11
Rapacian	10	11	9	8	11

The stat points you assign should accentuate these natural gifts—make a character more of what he or she already is. As you can see, certain races are better equipped for certain roles. Juraks, Dwarves, and Ferrans, with high natural strength, are basically set up to be fighters. Faerkins, Elves, and Rapacians, with high dexterity, are equipped to play the rogue. Goreaux, Elves, and Humans, with high intelligence, are spellcasters. (Humans, in fact, are so right-down-the-middle that they can function as jacks-of-all-trades.)



Next come skill assignments. See the Character Development section for details on what's hot and what's not. But basically, you'll want to assign these 100 points to the few specific areas (Figure 1-5) where they are most needed.



**Figure 1-5.**  
Be selective in assignment of skill points.



**Figure 1-6.**  
And don't spend all of your money on one element of your kit.



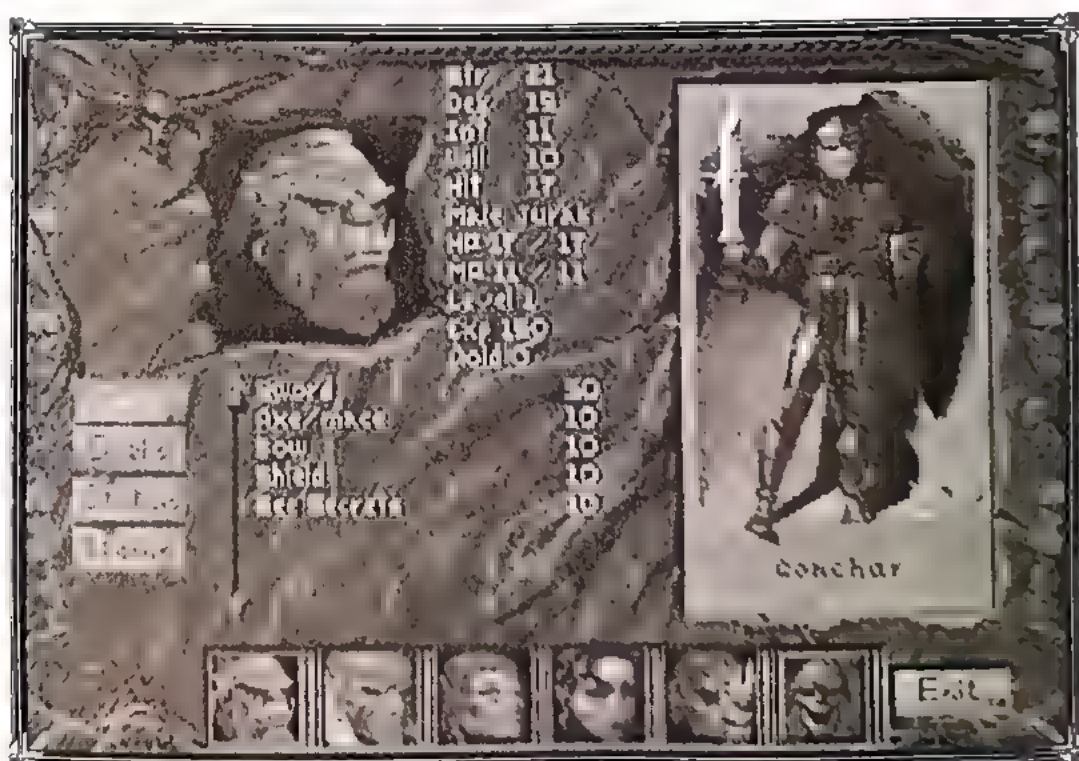


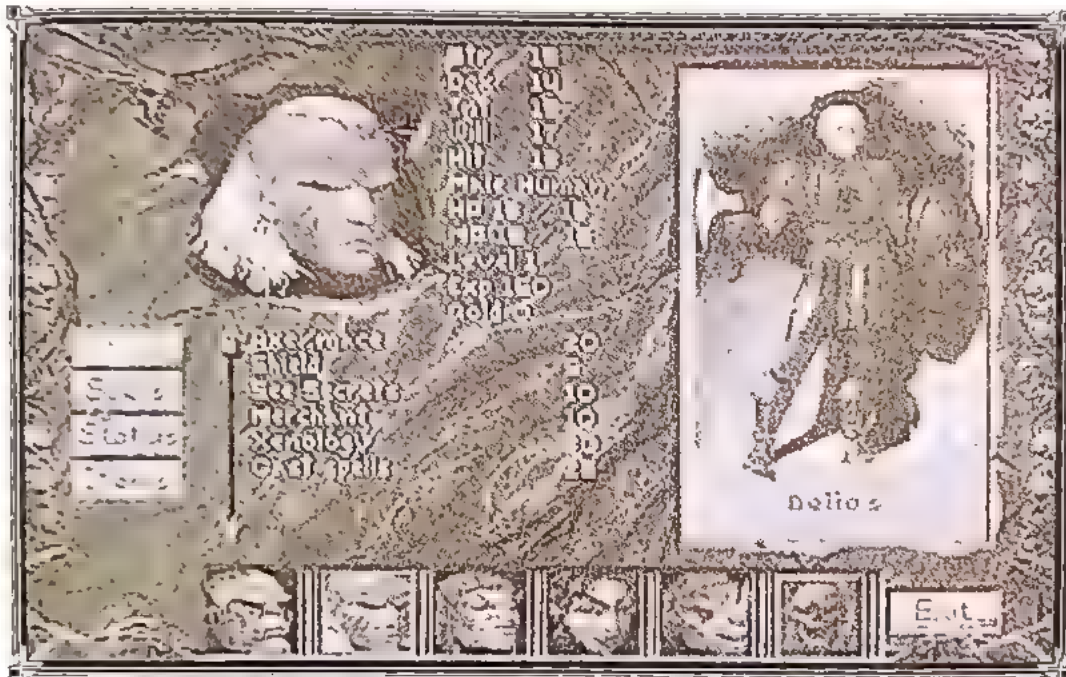
Finally, when you buy equipment, don't blow each character's 500 gold pieces on expensive items like the flail and sabre. It's tempting to try it to jump-start your party this way. But you'll be fighting in a loincloth, and folks in loincloths who aren't Tarzan don't have a long lifeline.

Take an even-handed approach and buy each character a reasonable suit of leather armor and a decent weapon (Figure 1-6) appropriate to their assigned skills. You probably won't kill critters with one blow, but you'll survive to find better stuff, and that's the important thing.

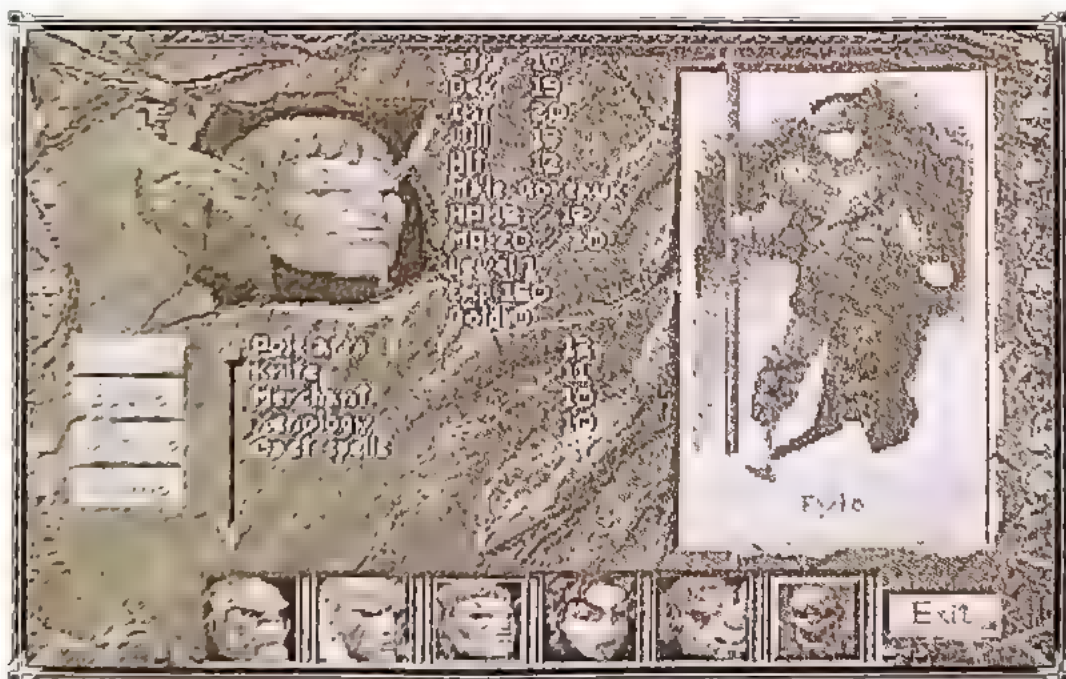
If this is all a bit much for you, or you could use a model to give you some ideas, you could do worse than check out the default party (Figures 1-7 through 1-10). It's not the ultimate gang of headbangers—default parties never are—but a well-balanced group that covers most of the bases. It consists of a Jurak fighter named Gonchar, Delias, a human who has some fighting and spellcasting ability; a Goreaux spellcaster named Fylo; and Turoc Luckrider, a lady Faerkin with a light touch. I'll be using them as reference points for much of this guide.

**Figure 1-7.**  
Gonchar, the Jurak  
fighter





**Figure 1-8.**  
Delias, the human



**Figure 1-9.**  
Fylo, the Goreaux  
spellcaster

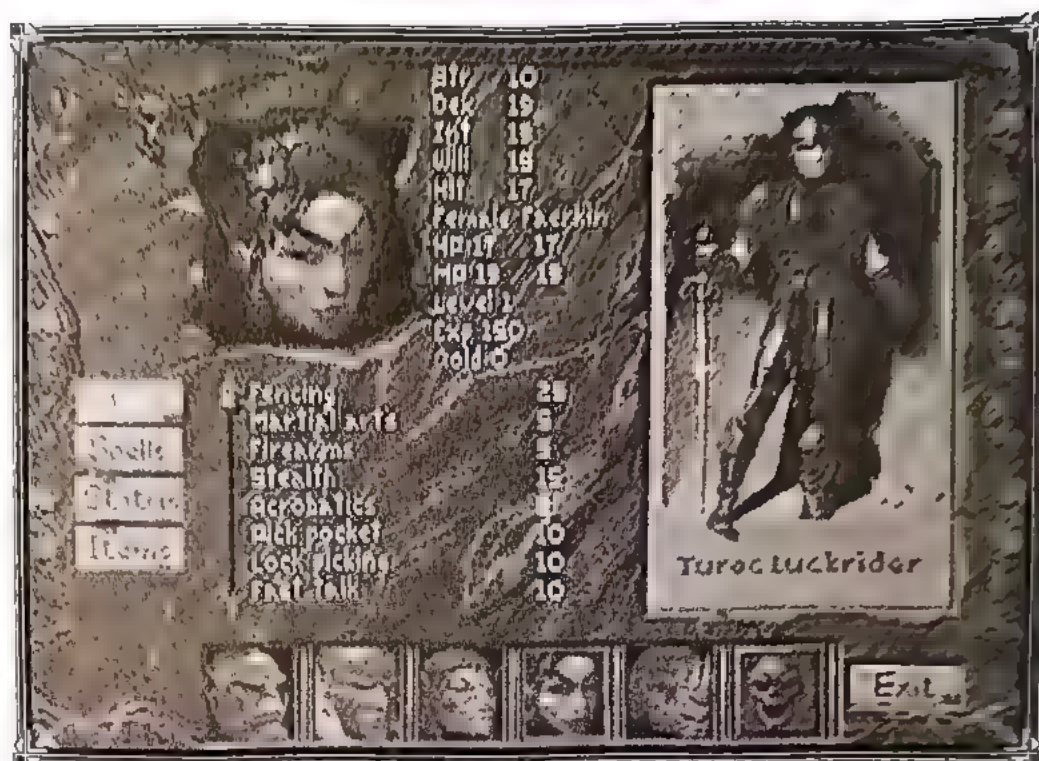
## Character Development

A character will receive skill points when he or she goes up a level in experience. In assigning these, maintain the focus you established when you created your characters and apply them to skills already established, rather than investing in new ones.



**Figure 1-10.**

Turoc Luckrider, a  
lady Faerkin



The temptation will be to create Renaissance men with fingers in many pies. Such characters will inevitably wind up with many facets, but none of the facets will really sparkle. In this respect, a living being with a two-track mind is far more valuable than a multi-talented corpse. The abilities of focused characters will improve more, and more quickly, and it removes the guesswork from plugging in skill points.

So what skills are important then? Well, hand-to-hand weapons and Cast Spell skills are givens. I'd recommend you focus on one weapon type per character. (The only one to avoid is the Knife skill, as there are few advanced Knife weapons in the game.)

Other skills that will come in handy are:

### **See Secrets**

One character should play the role of scout. *Thunderscape* positively blossoms with secret doors, panels, and hideaways, and the character blessed with the appropriate See Secrets skill will pick out these hidden entrances without you having to search or refer constantly to the map. This should be your active (highlighted) character for most of the game.





## ***Xenology***

Another character should take on the role of, for the want of a better term, "target analyst." The player with a high-level Xenologist in the party can right-click on a given enemy and get back a detailed reported of weaknesses, strengths, resistances and immunities, the type and range of damage the party will take from its attacks, and even a word or two on tactics.

It's almost like mind reading. If you don't know who you're fighting, you can't fight well.

## ***Lock Picking***

You will be in enemy territory virtually the whole way. That's going to mean lots of doors locked against you, and you'll need a character with a lockpicking skill of at least 100 to complete *Thunderscape*. The higher this value goes, the less frustration you'll experience clicking and clicking and clicking in an attempt to open a reluctant door.

## ***Bow and Firearms***

A good Bowman or sharpshooter is not essential, but it is definitely valuable. Ranged weapons can prove enormously useful in areas where monsters cluster at a distance or are prevented from reaching you by obstacles.

## ***Skills to Avoid***

The idea behind the Merchant skill is to get the best prices when buying or selling.

But frankly, once you leave Skelon's Gorge, you won't make all that much use of shops for buying items except in special cases. (A party equipped with store-bought goods can only rarely compare to one decked out in found finery.)

Moreover, as the game progresses, you'll quickly discover that you're dealing, not with thousands of gold pieces, but tens and eventually hundreds of thousands. At this stage, the money to be gained from the skill becomes secondary to the diversion of resources from other skills. (Besides, a party with 300,000 G/P trying to knock down the price on a Healing potion is a little like a millionaire haggling with a cashier over a 50-cents-off coupon.)



Pickpocket is a similarly dubious skill. Why steal from shops that you wouldn't buy things from to begin with? If you're short on money, you probably don't have yet the ability to steal consistently enough to make it worthwhile. And by the time you do have the ability, there's little need.

## Combat

I know. There should probably be a big long section on combat, but it's simpler than you might think. Don't overcomplicate things: The "standard" attack will serve you well in almost every circumstance.

But always use the Xenology skill before you strike a blow. And always check your stock of weapons for items effective against a particular type of enemy.

## Ranged Weapons

Using bows and guns well is a little tricky. For one thing, it's hard to gauge the distance at which you can be sure of hitting an enemy with your shot and not have the enemy simply turn and engage the party. That's a delicate balance best learned from experience, but you can hit enemies you can't see.

Another hard part for the novice can be aiming. Don't aim directly at the character. Your shot is invariably going to be high. Try aiming at the ground half to three-quarters of the way to your target.

## Magic

Ah, magic. Your secret weapon in the early levels, it will save the party's hide many a time. Later in the game, when your weapon hits begin to catch up to magic hits, it may assume a more mundane role.

You can't advance your Cast Spells skill fast enough. The higher the number, the wider the pool of spells you can select from when a magic user goes up a level. The game is slow to give you spells that hit multiple enemies in combat. Once you learn Lightning Bolt and Fireball, you're on your way.

Incidentally, any character can cast spells, and it's a good idea to give every character that ability. In the beginning just give them a few Cast Spells points so they can cast Heal and Dispel and supplement the party's regular spellcasters. Later in the game, you can begin to divert more points into the Cast Spells skills of fighters and rogues. By game's end, the whole party should have close to a full repertoire of spells.

## Reinventing the Inventory

The role-playing game (RPG) inventory is kind of a strange concept. It's not exactly a tidy little knapsack: It's this huge burlap leaf-bag full of stuff you're either too scared to sell, too greedy to just drop, and just too distracted to put to good use.

That's true of *Thunderscape* as well. You will quickly accumulate a huge reservoir—up to 192 unequipped items for a full six-member party—of cast-off and found weaponry, potions, keys and notes. Much of it you'll want to sell to generate some income.

But a lot of stuff invariably will get lost, set aside for later perusal, or sit around gathering dust. There's no reason for that. Characters can accommodate three rings on each hand and an amulet on their chest. Load them up. It's not going to hurt them. There shouldn't be an unused ring in your inventory.

That spare helm isn't going to suddenly sprout wings and fly. Unless one of your characters goes berserk, throws all his armor in a chasm and goes swimming in the Radiant Citadel moat—and that ain't gonna happen!—you're not going to need it. Sell it or dump it.

Don't use your spellcasters as a depository for scrolls. Distribute combat scrolls to every member of the party. A character who looks at his inventory during combat has access only to what he's carrying. (Items can't be transferred in the heat of battle.)

And use those potions. Nobody had to tell you twice to use Healing or the two Cure potions. But Armor, Strength and Haste sometimes get neglected. Their effects are immediate, significant—Strength boosts a character's strength stat by 10 points—and long-lasting. An inventory isn't for carrying or tabulating. It's for using, so use it.





## Non-Player Characters

Trust them. They may get grumpy and sentimental, and then may leave you in the lurch, but the non-player characters (NPCs) in *Thunderscape* won't betray you. Their specs typically will exceed those of an earlier NPC and should always be accepted into the party.

## Saving

How dull. This is one of those things that every strategy guide tells you to do. It's especially critical in *Thunderscape*.

Why? Well, let's just say Aden doesn't appear to have a full-service healer with an office under the mountains. Dead is really dead here. You don't learn the Raise Dead spell until you're quite some ways into the game. Restoring saves is poor man's substitute. Then again, certain healing pools in *Thunderscape* have been known to resurrect the dead.

## Exploration

Getting around in *Thunderscape* is easy. (It would be easier if monsters weren't standing in your way all the time.) But figuring out where you are using the automap can sometimes be confusing.

If you're ever unsure of your location, hit the "F4" key when on the main game screen. You will be given three coordinates, the map file name and number of the version of *Thunderscape* you're playing. The "X" figure indicates where you are within the 63-by-63 maze along an east-west line; the "Y" along a north-south line; and the "Z" coordinate is effectively your altitude. (A number of the game maps are multi-level, and there may be two or more locations with the same X and Y coordinates.)

I'll use these coordinates, separated by commas, to refer to obscure locations.

Exploration can be a lot of fun. *Thunderscape*'s concept is a kind of "loose linearity." That is, there is an overall course that you must follow to progress in the game, but many of the fine points of that course can be pursued or ignored at your discretion.



So, for instance, you don't *have to* move directly from the Troll Caves into Vanguard Keep, and can, instead, explore the two Bowels of the Mountain levels up to a point. You don't have to see all of the Troll Caves. You don't have to see both sections of the Founder's Cave or all three parts of Lower Karegh-Konan.

However, there are enticements to visit those areas in the form of weapons, armor, magical items, or just exotic locales.

And I'd tell you about some of them. But I see I'm keeping you from your assigned quest, and there isn't much time. We'll get to it later.

Good luck. Aden is counting on you.

But then, you knew that.







## The Art of Bluffing

*Your party explores Skelon's Gorge, makes friends, finds better equipment, and opens the door to the Troll Caves.*

It is dark when your party arrives on the dock in Skelon's Gorge, but darkness should have been expected. The world of Aden is deep in shadow, and that is why you are here.

But where is here, exactly? And what is it like? Certainly it's no vacation spot. Behind you, a gray-green river churns tirelessly and then recedes into the blackness to the east and west. A beaten-down building looms to the east, and to the north and south, sand-colored bluffs rise up to the sky.

Grim scene, and it's going to get grimmer from here on in. Maybe we should all just go home and go to bed, and wait for the Nocturnals to come knocking. No sir, Mr. Nocturnal, we didn't like Skelon's Shield. The light kept us awake at night. Yes sir, Mr. Nocturnal, thank you very much for the eternal darkness.

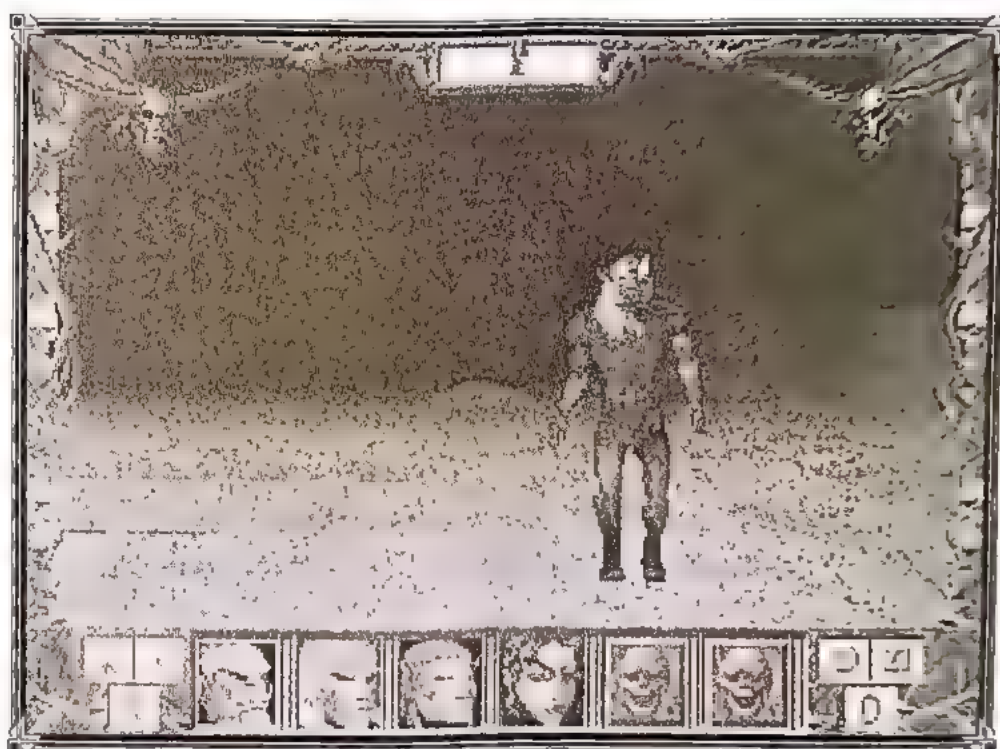


## Meeting Theros

But, hey, enough brooding, there's a job to be done. Things are not entirely grim after all, and good news soon comes your way in the form of Theros (Figure 2-1), your welcoming party of one. When you first meet this courtly creature (who sounds a bit like Jeremy Irons at 16 RPM), he will tell you a tragic tale about how he survived the Nocturnals' assault on Vanguard Keep, and then he will make a proposal to join your party.

**Figure 2-1.**

The party meets Theros, captain of the guard at Vanguard Keep.



You should go ahead and accept him into the party, even if you have a few suspicions. There'd be no love lost if you just said "no"—he'd be as courtly as ever—but why say no to so inviting a recruit! This big Ferran has a way with a range of weapons, and once you take him on, his speech will set up the first leg of the party's trip rather nicely. On to the Troll Caves!

**Note:** You won't get a second shot at Theros, so you'd better recruit him now. All the NPCs in *Thunderscape* appear just once. This isn't the movies, and Theros isn't going to turn up in the thick of battle just to pull your hash from the fire.



Also, be sure to check the inventory of your No. 1 character—Gonchar, in the case of the default party—for the note that Theros delivered to you. It sets up your quest to restore the beacons that power Skelon's Shield, and contains a pair of clues that will help you through puzzles in the early part of the game.

## First Fight

Theros will scarcely have joined you when the party goes into battle for the first time against giant bees that approach out of the northeast.

Don't worry. The first combat sequence in a role-playing game can be a doozy, but this one is a summer breeze with Theros on board. The bees, found in small swarms along the riverbanks, are really more nuisance than threat, although it should be noted that they have a nasty, bee-like habit of poisoning party members with their sting. Be sure to look for the telltale yellow box around the character portraits of your party members after such battles and have a Cure Poison spell at the ready. If there isn't enough "medicine" to go around, cure the weaker party members first; over time, the stronger can get the poison out of their systems on their own.



## Living Off the Land

It's not all that difficult to get to the Troll Caves. The hidden entrance is a short trip across the river and up the northern bluffs.

At this stage, the party isn't really dressed for combat, and you'll probably want to find some better weapons and armor. However, resist the urge to make a break for the shop just to the north of your present location. It doesn't hurt to look, certainly, but you don't have any money and you can't afford to sell off your pitiful stock of starting equipment. You're going to have to live off the fat of the land for a little while.

That's an unenviable task, for this dusky stretch of riverside land seems to be on a diet. However, as you take stock of your surroundings, notice that there are three items lying out in the open on the low bluff to the south and southeast: two mossy rocks and a buckler (a small shield). The rocks can have a practical use, and Turoc could certainly use that shield. She's the only member of your party who didn't begin the game with one. Your approach is almost certain to attract a larger swarm of giant bees, though, so heal up before you continue.







**Figure 2-2.**  
Sheesh. The places  
people leave their  
keys.

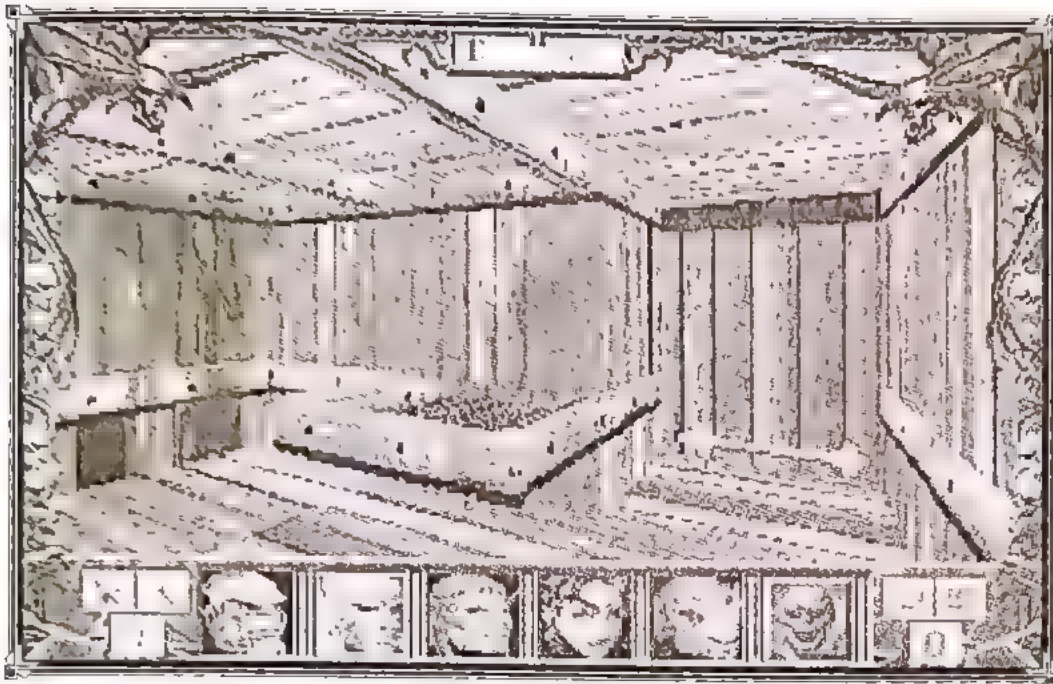


However, that's about it. Most items of interest are tucked away out of sight. Finding them is the real fun of this section, and we'll try to make sure you don't miss out on even one.

For starters, get the *Gem Cave Key* (Figure 2-2). You'll find it under the southern edge of the dock. Depending on the composition of your party, this item may not be strictly necessary, but if you lack a member adept at picking locks (like the accomplished Ms. Luckrider), the key will come in handy soon enough.

Also, don't forget to have a peek at the abandoned storage room around the side of the shop. (We'll disregard for a moment the ethics of poking about in the back of someone else's shop.) It appears empty, except for the barrels and cobwebs. However, with a closer look, you will notice that the architecture suggests a secret area. And sure enough, if you click on the dark gray nail—the second one from the left of the plank that runs across the center of the east wall—a drawer will slide open silently to your right (Figure 2-3). Inside this drawer, you will see a *Ring of Perception*, which adds 20 points to both the wearer's *See Secrets* and *Xenology* skills, and a *Lightning Bolt* scroll. Give the ring to Delias, who is skilled in both *See Secrets* and *Xenology*.

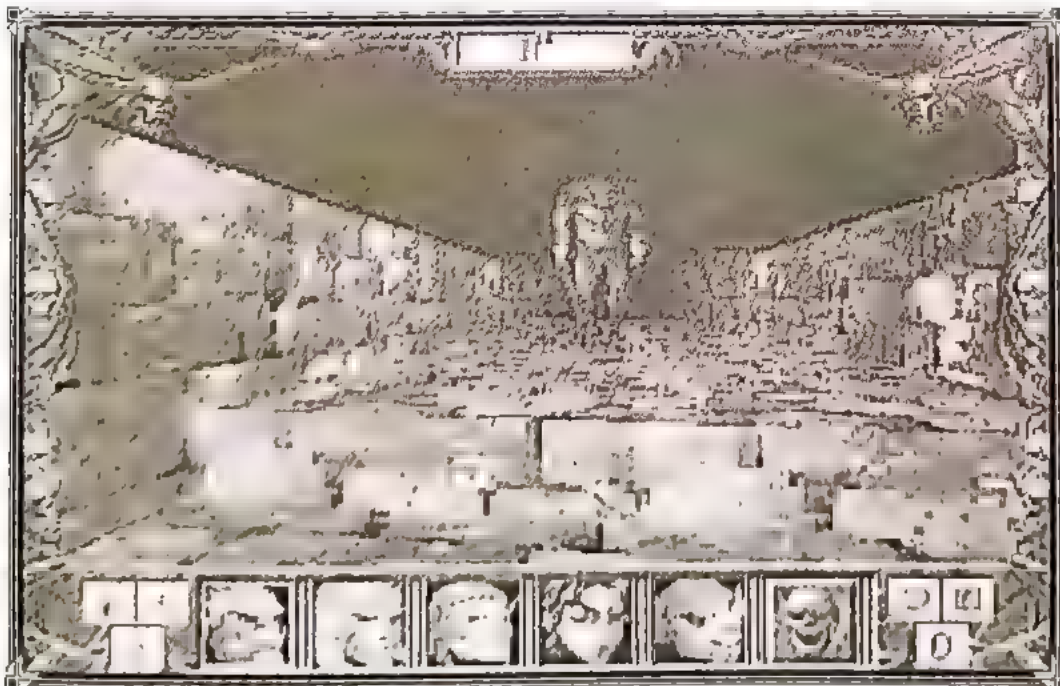
When you leave the storage room, look to the east and you'll catch a glimpse of a stone bridge. This is the only way across the murky river, and while you're not done on this side yet, a visit now will enable you to fill out your party.



**Figure 2-3.**  
A secret place in an  
old storage room

## Clubbing with Bert

You can never have enough party members, so let's go meet Bert (Figure 2-4). He'll confront you when you step onto the bridge. He's big, simple, and strong as a bridge Troll. In fact, that's exactly what he is. To Bert, you are "squishies"—which suggests something of his prior experience with



**Figure 2-4.**  
Say hello to Bert ...  
carefully!



non-trolls—and he immediately suspects that you have stolen his precious and missing club. (He's very good at whining and it's more than worth it to return a second time just to hear him pine pitifully for his weapon.)

Don't get any ideas. Even without the club, Bert's entirely capable of pounding your party into a fiber-rich mush. So negotiate this situation with caution. The best route is to simply offer him one of those mossy rocks from the bluff. (Mmm, lots of iron.) He'll munch it like an apple and offer to join you without further mention of his club.

If you passed up the rocks, agree to find Bert a present (namely, his club), and he'll let you go. Make tracks in the opposite direction once you do so because he's serious about defending this bridge. If you lie and say you have to cross the bridge to find the club, or agree to gift him and try to cross without fulfilling your promise, you'll be in for a deadly fight.

Sacrificing this likable, if dim, giant, or your party's good health, to a purposeless skirmish doesn't make sense. So welcome Bert with open arms—very wide open arms—and go find his club. It's close by. Make your way back toward the shop, up the ramp onto the southern bluffs, and then go south until you see a section of wall inscribed with a serpent. This is a concealed entrance to a mountain cat lair. (You may have to fight a pair of these panther-like creatures on the way in. They're aggressive packrats, but relative pussycats in a fight.) Click on the door to open it, enter, and take the first right. Next click on the end wall of this passage to open a hidden area, and, lo and behold, you will see Bert's club looking very much like a giant chicken leg. (Hey, he's a troll, so you never know.)



Turn the club over to Bert—as its description suggests, it's too unwieldy for your other warriors—and be sure to look down to find the Healing potion at your feet. (This should become standard operating procedure. A lot of interesting loot is lying around on the ground.) Head back to the main tunnel and explore the lair further. You've opened up one of the largest of the caves along the river and there is much more to see.







## Easter Egg Hunt

Once back in the main tunnel, bear right twice and you'll find yourself facing a locked gate. There are two ways through this gate. A character with Lock Picking skill, like Turoc, can jimmy the gate (which may take a while at this stage of the game). Or you can use the Gem Cave Key you found beneath the dock. When you get through the gate, the party can collect a Strength potion and a leather cap (which should go to the hat-less Delias); the party can also pry gems worth 255 G/P from the walls. Very nice!

Now, if you turn yourselves around and hang a right at the first intersection, you'll be headed back into the open air. On the way out, remember to save your game and to have Turoc try her hand at the chest off to the left. The contents of this chest will always include 225 G/P, but the two removable items are random, ranging from the semi-crummy (oh, great, another short sword!) to the potent (plate great helm and composite bow).

If any of your characters are still hurt, let them have a sip from the pool off to the right. This pool will heal the whole party, and, as you can go to the well more than once, make note of its location.

Depart by the east exit, hop down off the bluff, and make your way across the bridge for another close encounter with the bee family. Doing this should kick all your original members up to Level 2. (Don't be surprised, however, if you're first pursued and attacked by one last mountain cat from the lair you just left. Where did he come from, you ask? Heh, good question! Some things man was not meant to know. Like many RPGs, *Thunderscape* relies on "monster generators" to keep up the bad-guy population and to keep the player guessing.)

If you didn't recruit Bert before, do so now. If you already recruited him, have another look at the bridge anyway. You'll recall that, on repeat visits, Bert looked up from under the bridge. Do you suppose he left anything behind? Eh, could be, doc! Sure enough, you'll find a zip gun and club concealed beneath the far end of the span.



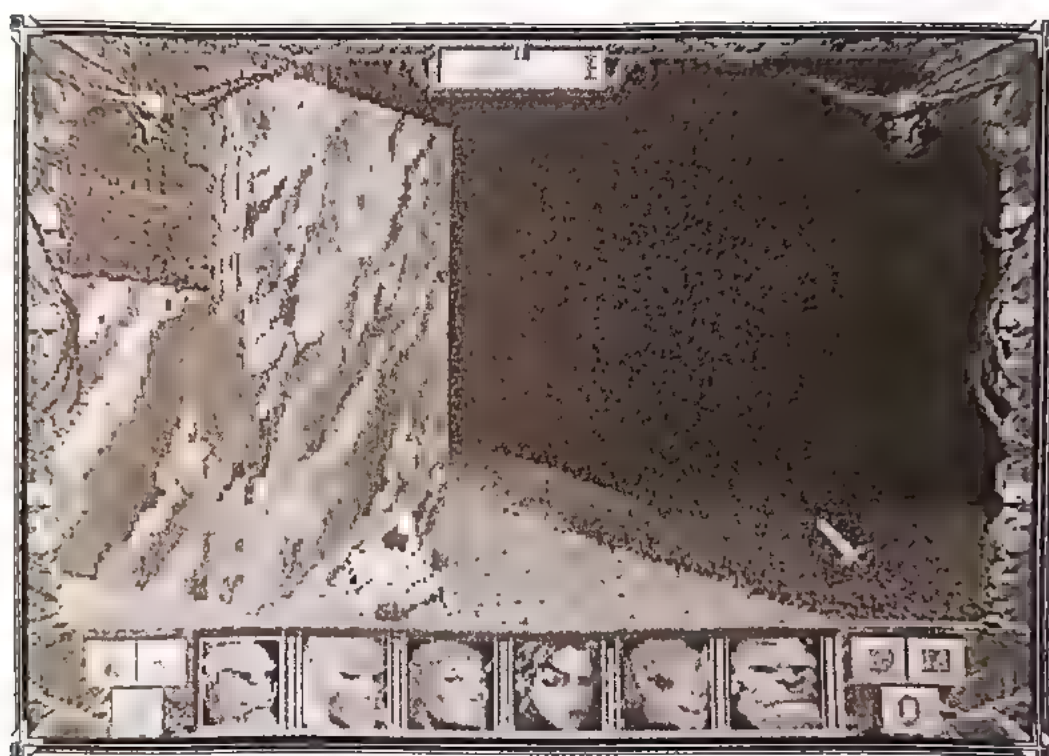


## Cliff Hopping

You'll also notice a tangled skeleton at the base of the cliff (Figure 2-5). In adventure games, tangled skeletons always have their fingers folded around some critical bit of info, but not this one. It's really just a warning that, while the party can drop from some bluffs safely, the high one that fronts the river's north bank is treacherous. Just say "no" to jumping and use the elevator.

**Figure 2-5.**

The bones don't hold anything of value. They're just a warning not to walk off the cliffs.



But not just yet, ok? The riverside bears some exploration. East of the bridge, you'll find a small lair and, beyond it, a sizable swarm of bees. (No loot, alas, but the experience is valuable toward what's to come.) West of the bridge, you'll eventually come upon a second swarm that seems very interested in something in the cliff face—even to the point of ignoring the party. Clear the bees out, and you'll see it's another mountain cat lair. Evict the cats, and you'll find leather leg armor and boots (both perfect for the fur-decked Fylo) plus, at the cave's rear, a Flash scroll and a chest containing 175 G.P. There, you see? You haven't spent a cent, and you've got better armor and almost 700 G.P. to your name so far.





It gets better, too. Remember what I said about jumping? Well, actually, it does pay to jump under certain circumstances. Notice the different tiers of terrain in the area around the elevator? You can hop onto these to reach otherwise inaccessible areas. (It can be a bit awkward using the mouse to get to these places, however, and it's best accomplished using both hands on the keyboard. Just be sure to leave a little room between the party and the platform you're trying to reach, so you can make it a running jump.)

For instance, heading north, then west, from the elevator entryway takes you up to a magical staff well-suited to Fylo. Taking a path north and east, on the other hand, may open a secret door in the north wall. This cave is vacant of life but well-stocked in supplies: ring leg armor, a Mana Bolt scroll, a short sword, and a chest with another 175 GP. (That seems to be a standard sum of money for chests in these parts. <grin>)

(The south side of the elevator entryway seems set up for similar exploration. Don't bother. You can't jump high enough to reach the final step, and while you can jump down from the top of the bluff, you'll take damage in the process—and there's nothing there.)

## Riddle Me This

You are now finished with the area along the river's northern edge. You should save your game again at this point and then open the elevator cage, bang the switch, and ride to the top. There, you will immediately face your toughest battle to date with four mountain cats who emerge from a recess to the northeast. There's a good chance they'll arrive on the battlefield one or two at a time, so you should survive. After they go down in flames, check out what they were guarding. Yes, it's a statue. When you find it, Theros will tell the story of the statue in the niche and confess that the riddle inscribed on its base is beyond him:



*In times long gone I watched this land.  
Never did I raise my hand,  
For a greater power did keep the serenity.  
Name for me that which once held authority.*





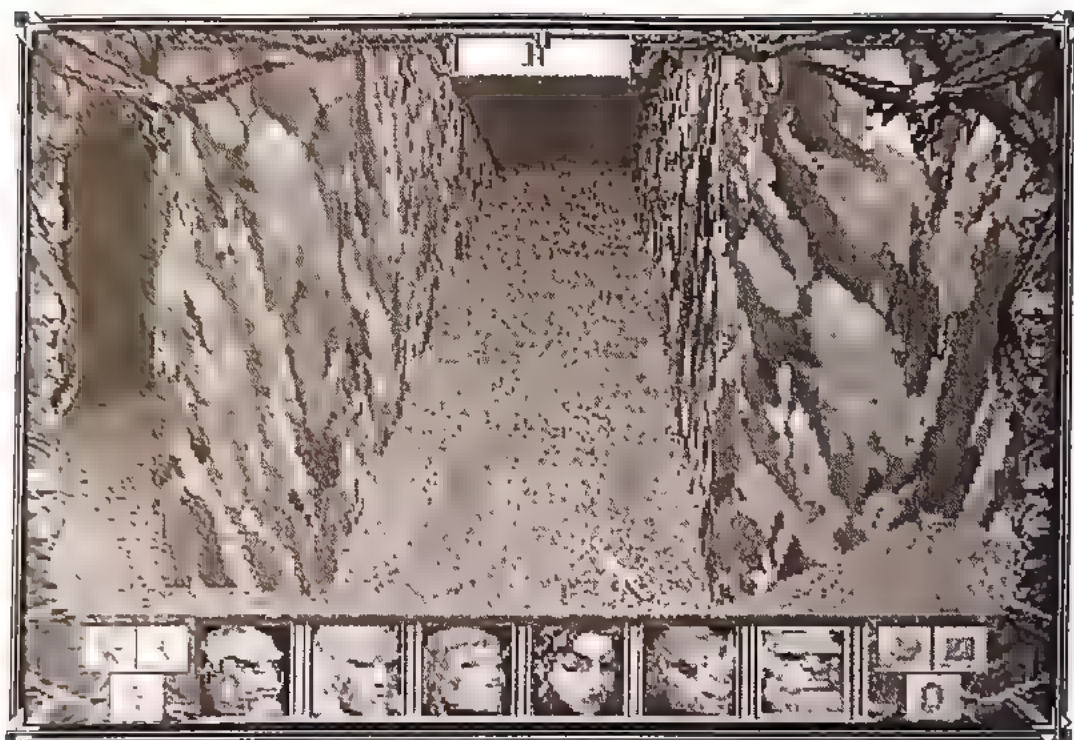


You may have an idea about what this riddle is referring to, but it's too soon to answer it. So pass it up; you'll be back here soon enough.

Aside from a pair of mountain cats to the north, that's really all there is to see on this level. Head south next, and climb the ramp located at the far end of this level (Figure 2-6).

**Figure 2-6.**

A ramp leads up to the second bluff.



At the top of the ramp, you'll face a skirmish with more bees and hear some truly horrible roars coming from behind a door to the north. What is that! That is your first of many encounters with trolls. Unhappily, they are not the Bert type. These ape-like creatures do not affectionately call you "squishies" and eat rocks like apples. They just try to squish you with their clubs.

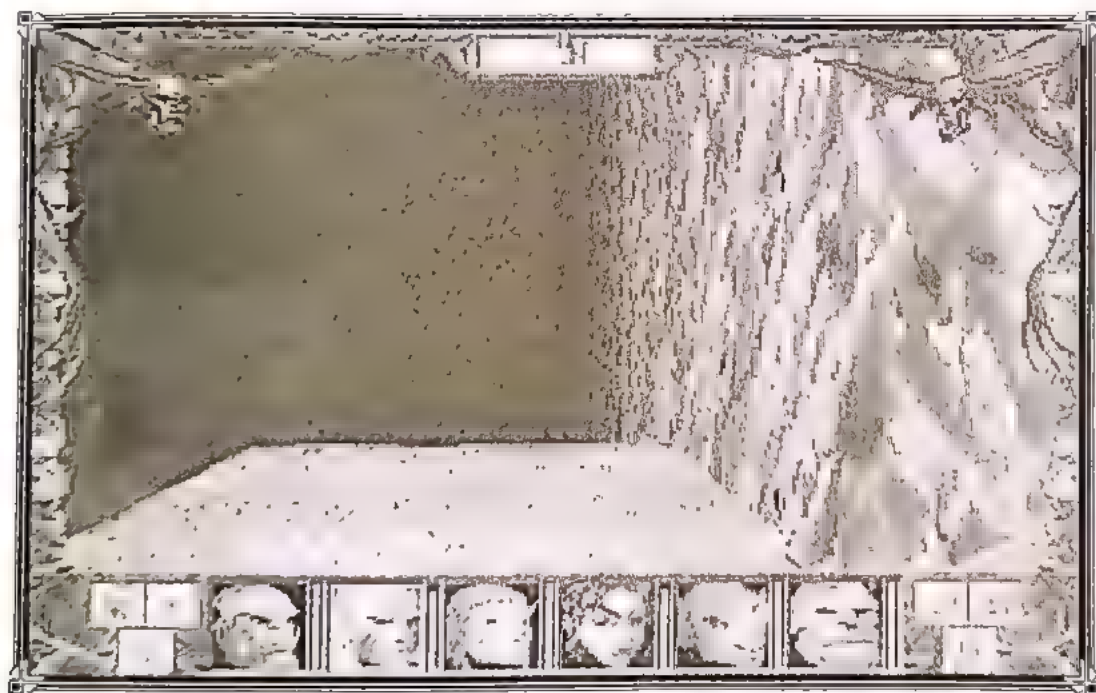
Happily, you're in good shape to face them, and they will go down bloodily after two or three rounds. If it somehow doesn't go well, remember this: Trolls are semi-intelligent creatures and a character with the Fast Talk skill (like Turoc) can offer them a bribe to leave. Money talks, and the trolls will walk.





After you kill the trolls, collect their clubs to sell later and hop through the narrow passage on the right. Pick up the Major Heal potion and pry out the gems you find there. Also, be sure to check the inscription on the rear wall of the main cave: "May bravery see you through the dark times, and peace be the land's reward." This message is a clue—actually, it's two clues—so store it in your memory.

North of your position, the land drops off into nothingness. It looks as though the whole northern section of this tier is inaccessible. Not quite! Could it be the air up here? Didn't we say no jumping? Well, go ahead anyways and jump the gap. Be sure to get a running start (Figure 2-7), and you'll land, comfortably and damage-free, on the bluff just opposite the statue. (If you look carefully at the wall above your landing zone, you'll see the spot's even been marked for you with an asterisk.)



**Figure 2-7.**

Get a running start to jump this gap.

To the north, you will see a doorway; this is the entrance to the largest of the mountain cat lairs in the Gorge. It's a two-level affair linked by ramps, inhabited by at least eight of the big cats, and containing (on the upper level) the best weapons you've seen to date: a cleaver called Skull Splitter, a sabre, epee, a light crossbow, and a short bow. Mercifully, you'll get to take on the cats in small bands as you seek out the loot, rather than all at once, and soon you'll be outside again.





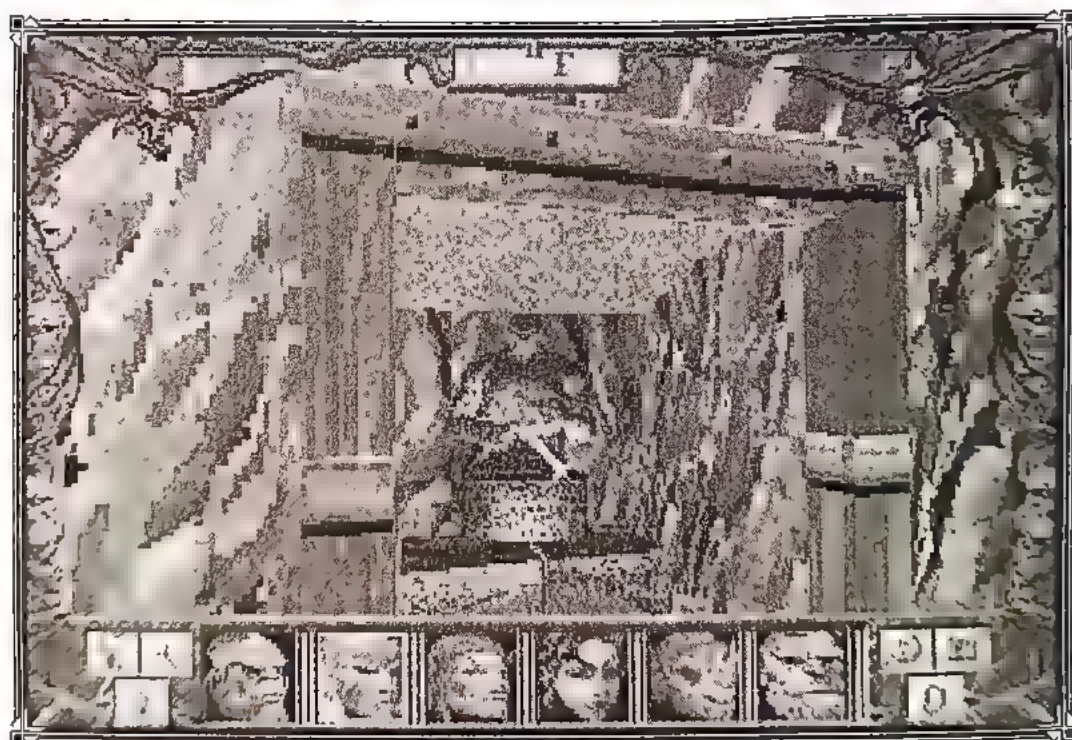
## Riddle Me That

Your next destination is the statue that controls the entrance to the Troll Caves (Figure 2-8). Surprisingly, it is lightly defended—no more than two trolls or a troll and two mountain cats—and once you're past them, only a riddle stands in your way:

*In times of war I may be lost  
In times of peace I cannot be proven  
In warrior's hearts I find my home,  
but all are enriched by my sharing.*



**Figure 2-8.**  
Answer this statue's  
question, and the  
way to the Troll  
Caves is clear.



Did you guess the answer? The correct response is: Bravery. If you missed the reference in the troll abode below, the word is also prominent in Theros' note. No, it didn't quite make sense to me, either—who says you can't prove bravery in peacetime!—but the statue just eats it up, and that's what's important.





The inscription will glow when you give the correct answer, and when you step back from the alcove, you'll find the environment has been subtly altered. To your left, a steep flight of stairs now ascends where no stairs existed before. At the top, you will see a great gray door with a ring-shaped knocker.

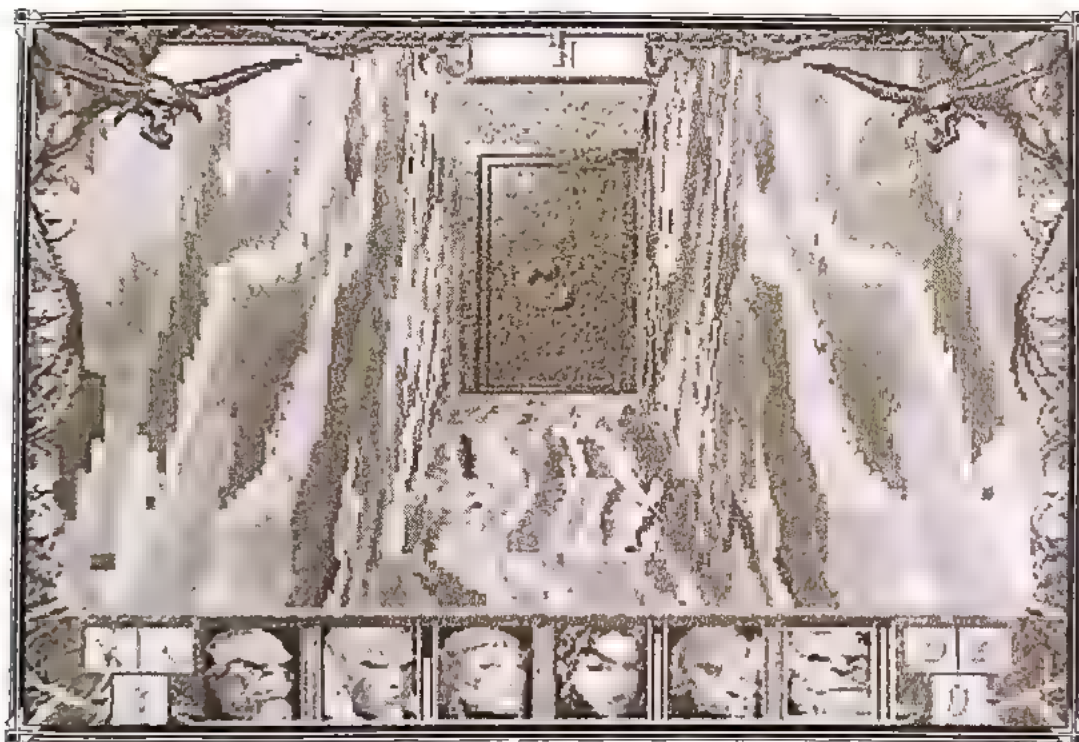
## Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Troll?

This big door is the entrance to the Troll Caves (Figure 2-9). Take a hint from the subtle sign across from the statue—"Go in troll caves and you dead"—and don't rush head-long into it. If you do, you'll be met head-on by a troll patrol, and guess who's going to win? That's right: Not you.



**Figure 2-9.**

The door to the Troll Caves



Instead, make your way (carefully) down the bluffs and back to the weapon shop (Figure 2-10). You seem to have put the entire Gorge's beastie population to the sword, but you finally won the dosh and the raw material to trade effectively with the shop's proprietor.

**Figure 2-10.**

Finca's shop. Not much for signs, is she!

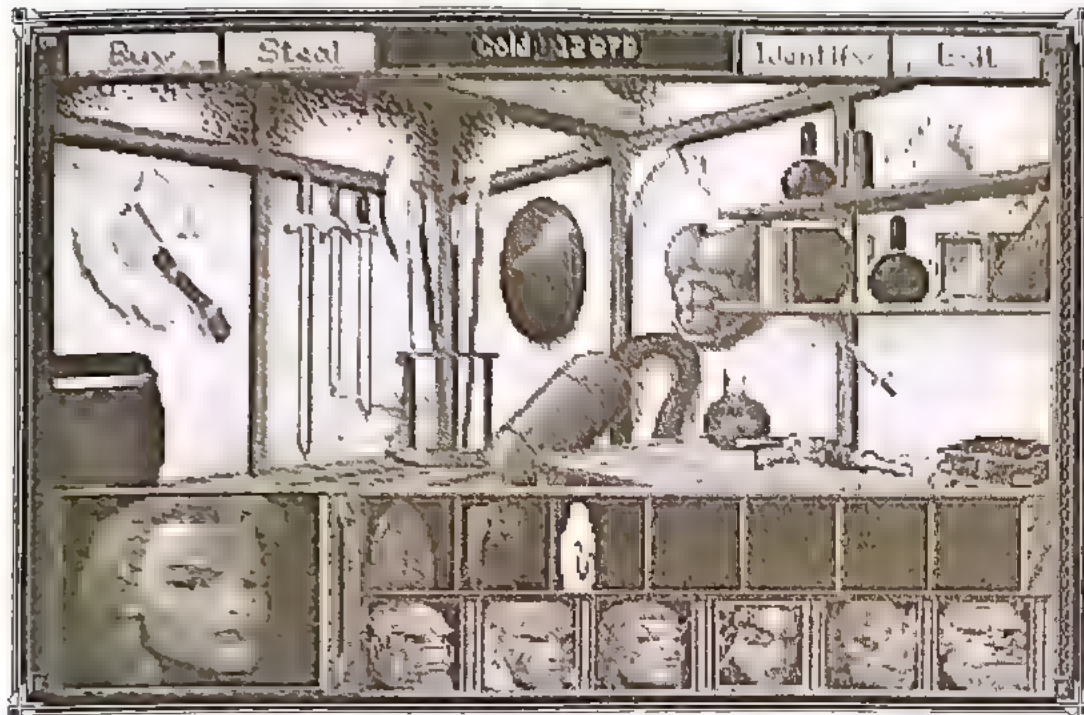


This is also a good opportunity to explore any areas you may have overlooked on your way up the bluffs. For instance, north of the Troll Caves entrance, on the top level, is another mountain cat warren where you can find a mace, spear, and a Cure Disease potion.

## *Shop Until You Drop*

Finca runs the shop. She is a red-headed woman with bluish eyes, an indeterminate shade of lipstick, and an opulent, obnoxious courtesy for paying and browsing customers. (Just looking, thanks.)

Start out by selling off excess items (like the trolls' clubs and assorted cast-off armor) to make your inventory less cumbersome. (The price of used goods is typically—but not always—about a third of what you'd pay for them new.) You should be able to bring the party's petty cash up to something over 1,500 G/P this way. That's not going to go far with six fighters. You will need to lose a big-ticket item as well, and, fortunately, you have one. The charmingly named cleaver (Skull Splitter) is a reasonable enough weapon, but it is really designed to give the party some heavy-duty capital (more than 11,000 G/P) once traded in (Figure 2-11).



**Figure 2-11.**  
Mommy, I want  
the pwetty shield!

But now, how should you spend all this newly gained wealth? Hard to say. This is a difficult business, and your best choices will vary a bit according to the makeup and equipment of your party. Here is some general advice:

- ◆ Draw up a budget. (Really. I know, everyone says they're going to and no one ever does. But if you do, you'll be happy you did.)
- ◆ Take stock of what you already have, and see if weapons in one character's inventory can be put to use by another.
- ◆ Be even-handed in your purchases. Aim for consistency across the full party. Don't neglect the needs of weaker characters.
- ◆ Don't go for the most expensive weapons, but also don't be cheap. Get the best you can afford.
- ◆ Be sure to use the shop's "identify" function (which covers items in the store's own inventory at no charge) so that you don't buy things for characters who haven't got the skill or strength to use them.



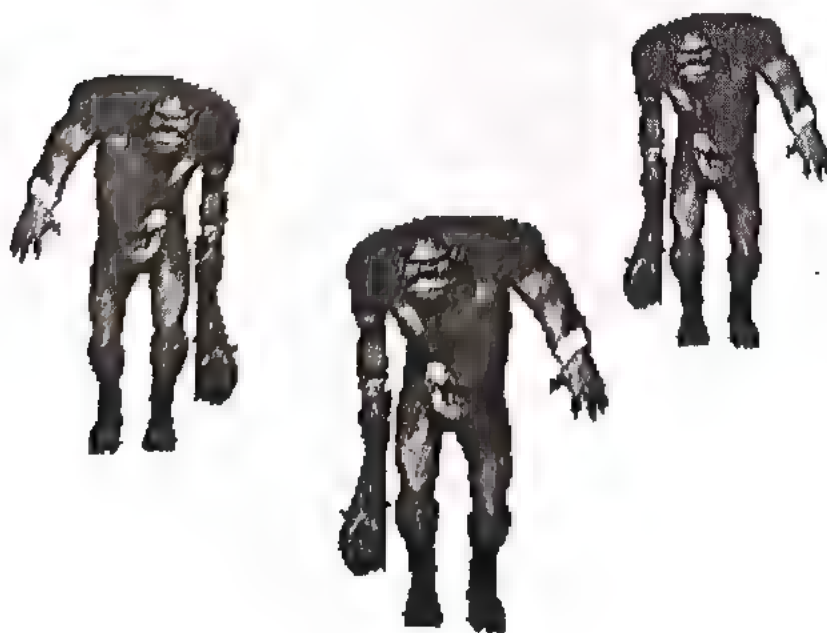
You could also try to steal. This wouldn't be honorable behavior, exactly, for these would-be heroes of Aden, but only the shopkeeper's opinion of you is at risk. And anyway, who's really going to know besides you and your saved-game files! If you fail—and you will almost certainly fail at this stage—you'll just get the boot and be locked out of the shop. And if you had the presence of mind to save your game first, all you have to do to get back in is to restore that saved game afterward.

The simplest way to handle the outlays is this: Upgrade all party members in need to leather caps and boots. Also, buy a set of chest and leg ring armor for everyone who could use it—this stuff never goes out of style. Once you've sold off the old armor, you should have around 7,250 GP for weapons. There's a lot of room to maneuver within that sum, especially since some party members already have suitable weapons. (Remember, Bert has his club, Theros his broad sword, Turoc her sabre, and Fylo his magical staff.)

However, remember that thriftiness really isn't a virtue here: You can't fight trolls by throwing money at 'em. I'd recommend a long sword for Gonchar, a battle axe for Delias, a rapier for Turoc, and a claymore—a monster two-handed sword—for Theros.

Got all that? Great! Now you're suited up, you're armed to the teeth, you're health is at maximum, and you're wanted for shoplifting. (Just kidding.) You look like a real RPG party. So far, so good.

But then again, not all that far, or all that good. Here come the trolls.





## Patrolling the Troll Caves

*The party divines the secrets of the Troll Caves, learns that cave-ins can be your friend and some pits are peachy, and separates a traitor from his life.*

### ***Establishing Your Presence with Authority***

No sooner do you step inside the Troll Caves than Bert, slower on the uptake than usual, announces that Droog, the troll king, will kill the party if he finds it within his domain.

Well, gee, thanks, Bert. Thanks a whole lot. Couldn't you have spoken up a little earlier? Three troll warriors are headed your way. You will see that they are armed with spiked clubs, and are good deal tougher than the trolls you've faced so far (Figure 3-1).



**Figure 3-1.**  
The trolls deal with  
uninvited guests.



Nevertheless, the party's pretty put together now, and a standard attack will lay the troll warriors out on their backs. However, you will inevitably take something of a beating in the process, and it's probably unwise to advance beyond the cave foyer until you've recovered. More trolls lurk to the north and west, and this place is just awash in Rock Lizards.

However, all you get in the end is the trolls' clubs. No cryptic orders pointing in such-and-such a direction. No dying whispers. No nothing.

## Rolling the Rock Lizards

Something along those lines does lie close by, though. If you head northwest, you will find a Rock Lizard lair. The three lizards that call this cave home are fierce (and loud) defenders of their turf. The sting of their acid will have party members squirming long after the fight is done, so use the Dispel spell to take the edge off the pain.







At the northern end of the cave, you'll find a skeleton, leather chest armor and leggings, a Troll Cave Gate Key, and a ledger. It seems the bones belong to a trader who was trapped here by the trolls and died of starvation.

Have a look at the ledger, which doesn't go into much detail. However, it does report that Droog has allied himself with the Darkfall and makes reference to an elevator (and a required password), two companions who fled further into the mountain, and another key.

## *Where to, Chum?*

The party's objective in the Troll Caves is to defeat King Droog and reach the entrance to the Vanguard Keep dungeons. To reach Droog, you need keys and a password. And to beat him, you'll need better weapons and armor. But how to find them?

You could head off to the west, and indeed, this would be a sensible choice if you were badly bloodied by the last two fights. Just exit via the lair's southern end, stay close to the southern wall, and eventually you'll come upon a healing pool like the one back in the Gorge.

Return to the lair the way you came. The giant, bloodstained door northwest of the pool won't respond to your keys, and you'll soon discover that just wandering around here isn't especially fruitful. The Troll realm is a giant, rambling maze, laden with pits, puzzles, and critters spoiling for a fight, and everything here tends to look a little like everything else.

The best course is to take it slow and steady. Think of the caves as a series of pieces, and tackle them one by one. Also, save often, retreat to the healing pool as needed, and don't be afraid to pop back to the relative warmth of Skelon's Gorge.

## *Northeast, Please, and Step on It!*

The northeastern section of the caves is the first region you should visit. From the foyer, head straight north, bear right at the branch in the passage, and open the unlocked gate; this will bring you to another cave. Advance into this area only enough to get the attention of the Rock Lizards inside. (Go too far, and you may find yourself fighting them all at once.) Pick the Rock Lizards off one by one as they come at you, and then you'll be free to explore the room's several exits.



The southeastern exit leads to nothing of interest, and the southwest and northwest ones cave in upon your approach. You'll be offered a chance to clear the debris, but you should leave it be for now. The cave-ins will actually help you out by holding at bay some creatures who would otherwise be lining up to take a poke at you.

Finally, the room's northeast corner holds two exits: a corridor and a hole in the wall. Following the corridor creates yet another cave-in behind you and plants you in a nest of Mantises and Mantis Warriors.

### *A Man-to-Mantis Talk*

A Mantis nest is not a nice place to be. For one thing, a group of riled-up Mantises can quickly poison every member of your party, and you'll be lucky if anyone comes out alive. For another, Mantises make the most annoying noise conceivable. Never mind the experience points: You'll want to kill every Mantis you meet just so it'll shut up.

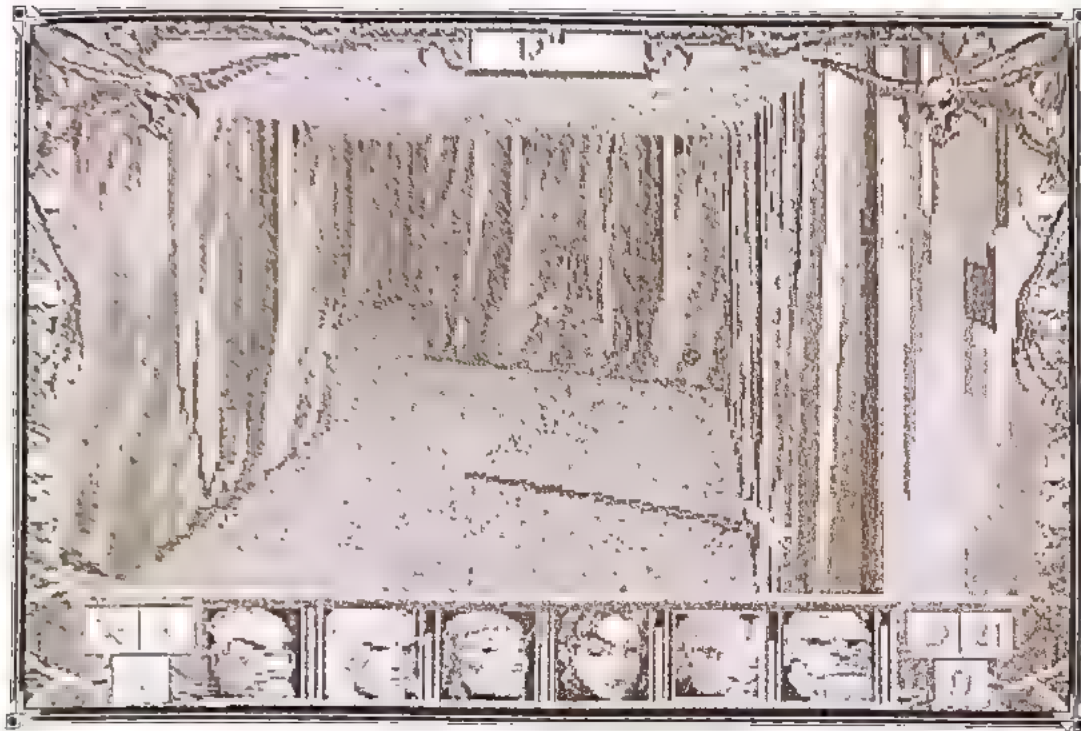
Killing Mantises is more easily achieved if you can take them on one by one. To do so, bear left down the corridor and quickly follow it around the bend to an L-shaped room. Kill the Mantis you find there, turn, and start digging some "Mantis holes." They'll walk, one by one, right into your trap. Return to the corridor to lure in more Mantises if necessary.

Once they're gone, you can explore the right-hand branch of the corridor at your leisure. You'll find a chain coif, a military fork, the Blood Staff (Figure 3-2), and an architectural curiosity: a stalactite and stalagmite. You might also find another Mantis or two, and there are sure to be some waiting for your party when you clear the cave-in debris that blocks the exit. (There seems to be no end to these things, it's true!) Use the same trick on them as you used for the other Mantises earlier.

### *Aliens: The Rock Lizards' Cut*

Clear the cave-in that trapped you in this area, and check out the hole in the corridor's northern wall (Figure 3-3). It leads up to a Rock Lizard lair. Use the ol' Mantis Method to lure out and kill the two lizards nearest the entryway, and then enter the large room to the west and dispatch a third.





**Figure 3-2.**  
The Blood Staff, a  
superb weapon for  
Fylo



**Figure 3-3.**  
The tunnel to the  
Rock Lizard lair

This is a good spot to stop and get your bearings—and to save your game—because the next part is a mile hairy. The northeastern corner of this lair is full of Rock Lizards, and I mean full. Remember the scene under the Atmosphere Processor in the movie “Aliens” when big black and toothsome started coming out of the walls? Well, this is *Thunderscape*’s “Aliens” scene.





You've got Rock Lizards in the room, Rock Lizards in recesses at the base of the walls, Rock Lizards coming in through the door behind you, Rock Lizards outside. The best you can do is try to keep a corner between you and the horde, and face as few at a time as possible.



The payoff? Brede's Katana (presumably, the skeleton nearby is poor Brede), a Healing potion and, from one of the Rock Lizard "dog houses" in the walls, some leather chest armor (Figure 3-4). (Incidentally, by using the crouch command, you can enter these low recesses. They don't contain anything, but it's a feature you'll want to call upon later in this level.)



**Figure 3-4.**

Swords with names are always strong—remember *The Hobbit*!—and Brede's Katana is no exception.



## Go West, Young Man

Make your way back to the chamber with the cave-ins. The cave-in that trapped you in here now seems to be a permanent condition, and you're going to have to find another way out.

Actually, there happens to be only one way out: The cave-in that blocked the northwest exit from the Rock Lizard lair can still be cleared. Beyond it lie a slew of Mantises and Rock Lizards for slaying, and three separate paths to explore.





How much you want to do, once you get past the cave-in, is up to you. There's a lot of running around empty brown halls and beating the tar out of Mantises and Lizards. It's good for building experience but, most of the time, the payoff is relatively low. You'll find a long sword at the end of the eastern path. The central path splits into many fruitless directions and one fruitful one. Crawl through a low passage and up a ramp, and you'll find a Kukri knife.

And the western path? Ah, this is where things start to get interesting again.

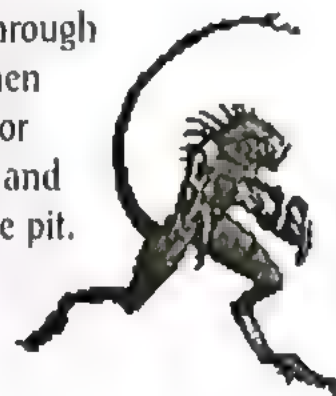
### *The Pleasure of Treasure*

For one thing, on the south side of the western path is a very big pit. Drop in any time. If you walk straight west from your landing point, you'll see a queer-looking section of wall. This almost always means a secret door, and so it does here. Push the space bar, and it will open. Be prepared to turn around quickly and take care of the three Mantises that will descend in an elevator to the east, and also note the lift's location. Then check out the treasure room where you'll find a chest containing 500 G/P, a Healing potion, a full suit of leather armor, and a Magic Heavy Crossbow. (The last item is a remarkable weapon. Do not part with it.)

Not bad! Next, hit the switch on the wall outside the room and climb aboard the elevator. Exit the lift to the south, and you'll find yourself in one of the Troll Caves' few really pretty places: a high-ceilinged room with walls coated in gems and a patch of mushrooms at the center (Figure 3-5).

The gems can all be pried off for a take of 3,000 G/P, and the mushrooms will temporarily raise, by 2 points, the strength stat of each party member who tastes them. And in the southwestern corner is the Ring of the Cat, which raises the wearer's Acrobatics skill by 25. (Turn this over to Turoc.)

Once you've collected all the loot, you could crawl through the southern tunnel and mix with the trolls outside, but then you'd really be getting off the beaten track, so save them for later. Instead, return to the pit, call the elevator, ride it up, and use its corner to help you mount a running jump across the pit. (Yes, you can make it.)





**Figure 3-5.**  
Strength and gems  
can be found in this  
room.



Then continue the short distance west to the end of the passage, and hop up into the recess in the north wall. Push the rear wall, and it will fall away, revealing another passage.

When this new passage branches, bear west. (The eastern branch holds only battles with your friends and mine, the Rock Lizards.) Eventually, you will reach a room with sloped sections of ceiling; from there, bear west, make your first right and then a left at the fork, and climb the stairs. Fight off the inevitable band of Rock Lizards and enter.



### *Drums in the Deep*

Sigh. So they didn't make it after all.

You have found the resting place of the trader's companions. Two skeletons lie forlornly in the corners of this high room, their belongings strewn about them; chain chest armor, Armor and Cure Poison potions, a Mountain Key and Troll Chamber Key, a note from Cerra revealing Droog's treachery and the vulnerability of Vanguard Keep, and another containing just one word—"maleficent."

Leave the dead in peace with the knowledge that you can put their equipment to good use. If you bear right as you leave the room, you'll find a second set of stairs—a shortcut back to the main corridor—where you should continue west.





At the fork, bear south into another den of Rock Lizards—as if you hadn't had enough of them by now—to find a flail, hand gun and about 700 GP worth of gems. The northwest path from this spot leads to an extensive warren containing ring chest armor and a Healing potion.



## It's the Pits

From the warren, backtrack to the slope-ceilinged room, and either drop into the pit (almost hidden in the room's southwest corner) or cross the narrow ledge along its eastern rim.

Right about now, you're probably wondering where in blazes this is all leading. After all, this move puts you in a smallish section of maze not all that distant from the spot where you entered the Troll Caves. You can descend through a gate into a low area and duke it out with a half-dozen trolls, or you can fall into two pits. That's about it.

The key is in the pits. The eastern one drops you into the area with the treasure room and elevator. And the western one (at 22, 22) ... well, you haven't been down here before. Lots of Mantises. An Acid Arrow scroll. A Dancer's Amulet (which should go to Turoc). And stairs, leading up, with a gap in between the two flights. You'll need to perform a running jump across the gap, and it may take a few tries before you get the timing down.

At the top, you'll go right into combat with a pair of Mantises. Afterward, get the round shield and morning star, and crawl south through the low tunnel. Kill the troll who's waiting outside.

## Light Up a Troll

You're in Troll Country now, and previously inaccessible regions of the Troll Caves are about to open to you. What you do next depends on how comfy you are with your party. If you've been following the guide closely, the whole party should be about Level 7 by now and equipped to move fairly quickly to a confrontation with King Droog.





Winning this confrontation, however, will be another matter, and I recommend a slightly more roundabout route. (Besides, don't you want to see what's in all those as-yet-unvisited sections of the map? Thought so!)

### *Of Switches and Stairs*

Head west and then south, and open the great door before you. You're now in the square enclosure in the caves' far southwest corner. Have it out with the three troll guards, and find the switch on the south wall.

A staircase will appear along the side of the great stone block at room's center. Climb it and find a second switch in the east wall of the stone's top section. Throw this one as well. It opens a door just below you, and you'll need to back up quickly, off the edge of the stone, and then move forward to get through the door before it closes again.

How nice! Once through the door, you'll find a healing pool, and about 1,250 GP worth of gems in the walls (Figure 3-6)! This will even bring a happy comment from Bert, who hasn't uttered a word since his worried remark about Droog back at the foyer.



**Figure 3-6.**

A well-concealed Easter Egg deep in the Troll Caves



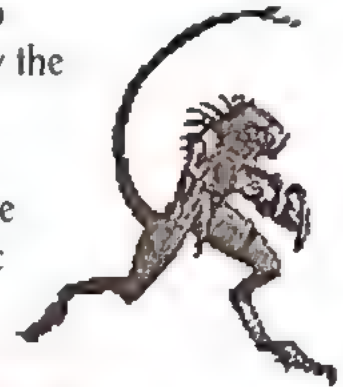




## Are We There Yet?

The switch room is the bridge to the whole unexplored southeastern section of the map. Climb up the three ramps that begin in the eastern wall and bear north at the top. Jump the gap, and then follow the lone passage on the other side to a cave-in site. Clear the debris, jump up through the entrance, kill the Mantis, and bear east. Follow the descending passage southeast, give a little hop to reach flat ground, and you're there.

Which is where? This out-of-the-way place seems to be another Mantis colony (Figure 3-7), with some atmospheric descriptions, but not much population or loot.



**Figure 3-7.**

The far southeastern part of the Troll Caves is home to the "preying" Mantis.

But persevere and you'll come upon some pleasant surprises. At the southern extremity, you'll find a small bow and magical stone inscribed with a glyph that means "lifeblood." This stone will heal a character in full and raise a dead character. Call on it sparingly because it runs out after a few uses.



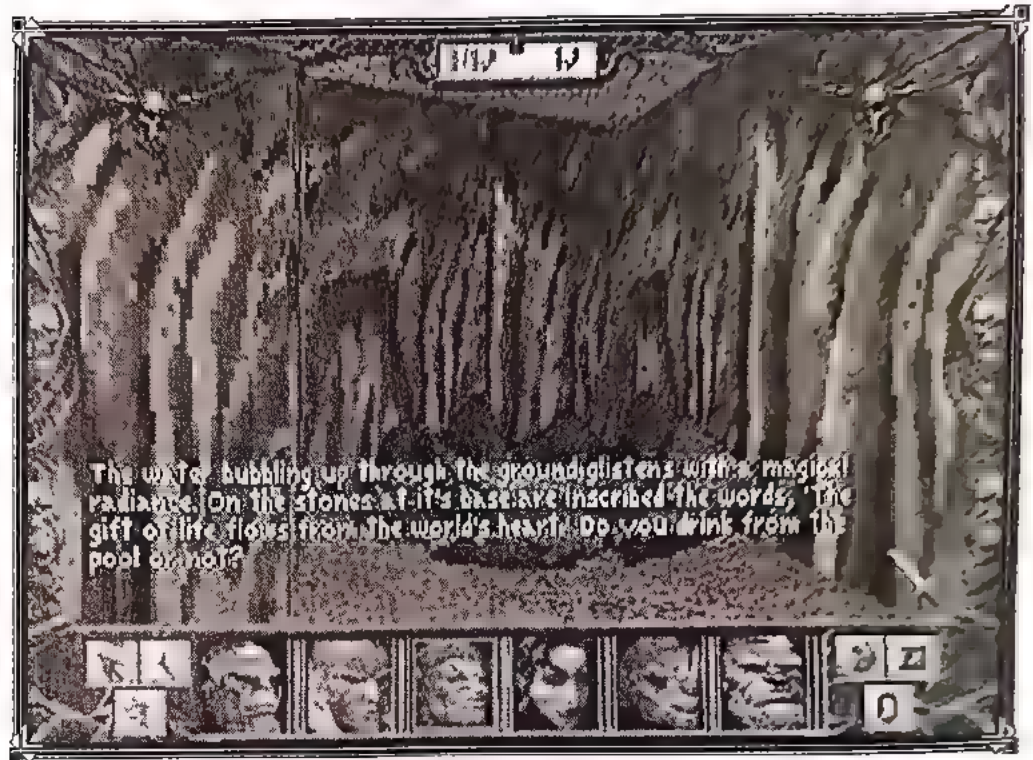




Continuing on to the northeast will take you to a jewel-bedecked wall (worth 1,700 GP), a pouch of Faerie Dust, a Breathe Fire scroll, and a healing pool that will raise the dead (Figure 3-8).

**Figure 3-8.**

Go ahead and drink. It's not like you're going swimming afterward or anything.



Worth the trip? I should say so! The only drawback is that the Mantises appear in force to intercept you on the way back.



### Building Character

If you think your party still lacks experience, head back toward the foyer. The monster generators in the Troll Caves seem to run at an exponentially higher rate than the ones in Skelon's Gorge, and, consequently, a whole slew of Rock Lizards (along with a couple of trolls) is hanging around the door back to Skelon's Gorge. (Another such hot spot, this one featuring Mantises, is along the north side of the big pit.)





## Droog Awaits

All set for King Droog? Then return to the intersection (12,40,488) outside the Troll Gate, and, this time, head north. Take care of the trolls that will greet you. Don't bother looking around for anything else in the outer chambers (save the chain chest armor). You'll get a message about hearing something large shifting in its sleep. Stay cool. This may sound like a dragon watchdog, but Strategic Simulations, Inc. (SSI) reports it's just a reference to sleeping trolls. But there's nothing unusual up there.

Bear northeast to reach Droog's front door (Figure 3-9). You've got the key already, so just click on it to enter. Fight off the trolls within, and take a moment to take stock of your situation.



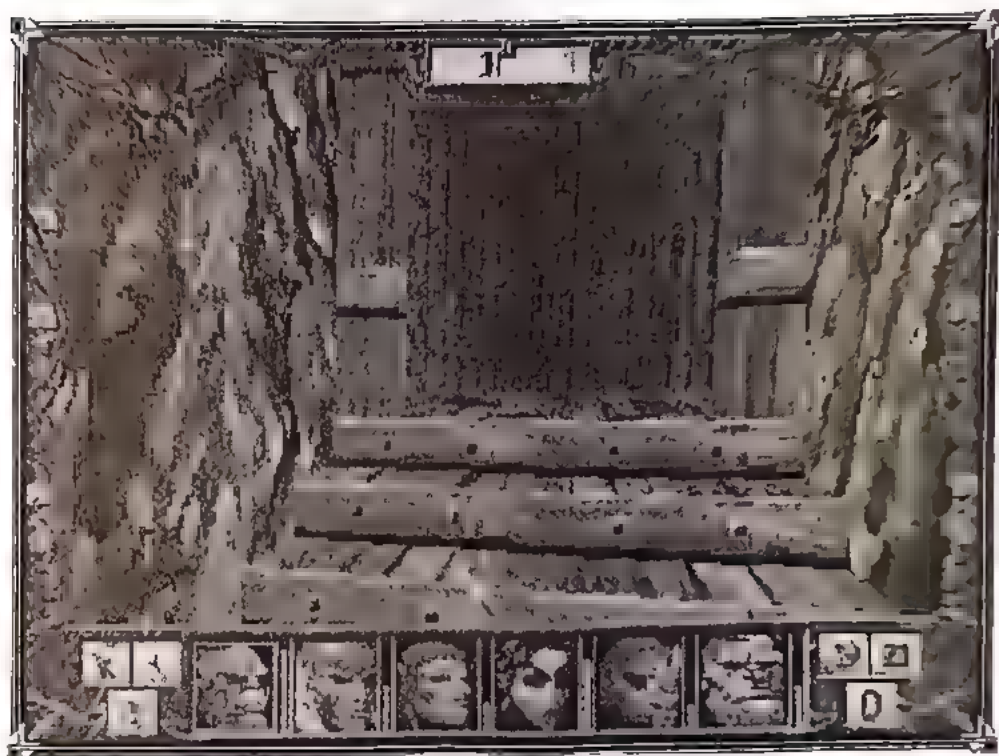
**Figure 3-9.**  
Was Kilroy here!





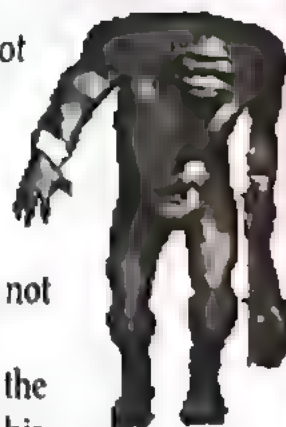
You can get right down to business if you wish. The elevator up to the king's suite is straight ahead (Figure 3-10). You only have to pull the handle, plug in the password ("maleficent"), and you'll go into combat the moment it reaches the top. (Watch the spelling on the password. If it's wrong, the character will absorb damage from the spellcasting machine to your right.)

**Figure 3-10.**  
The lift to Droog's  
penthouse



However, there's one thing about King Droog: He's got 500 hit points. You'd be surprised how long it can take to use up 500 hit points, not to mention the 175 HP of each of his troll warrior attendants. Plus, the longer the combat continues, the greater the chance he's going to start throwing serious spells at the party—spells which you may not be able to answer at this stage of the game.

Of course, it would be nice if there was a way to take the edge off Droog's abilities, and there is. Have a look around his antechamber. At the north end of the room, get the Chest Key, pry the 750 G.P. worth of gems off the walls, and heal up at the healing pool. At the south end, open Droog's chest to obtain 1,250 G.P. and his contract with a Nocturnal known as "The Dark One." (If you don't have the key, the character opening the chest will take damage.)







Read the document and you'll see that the deal grants Droog immortality and magical abilities in exchange for access to the secret entrance to Vanguard Keep's dungeons. Note also that the contract seems to give off a "sense of power;" it sounds as if the document is a physical embodiment of the deal. Perhaps, if it were destroyed, Droog's immortality would also vanish!

It's worth a shot, so try holding the contract over the brazier nearby. It burns up cooperatively, and when you take a stab at Droog, you'll find he has only 250 HP.

Droog has become beatable, but it's still going to be a nasty fight (Figure 3-11). We haven't talked much about magic so far—partly because spells haven't been needed for anything much beyond housekeeping tasks like healing, and partly because most of the game's early spells don't damage the enemy directly. However, you should at least have either Lightning Bolt or Acid Bolt at this stage. Have one spellcaster use the spell repeatedly and another tend to healing as needed, and in no time at all, you'll be admiring the new graphics tiles and picking over Droog's personal belongings. (The loot from Droog works out to 1,850 GP; an Awl Pike, a Bastard Sword, a little trinket called a Smithy's Ember, which offers protection against fire, and a random potion.)



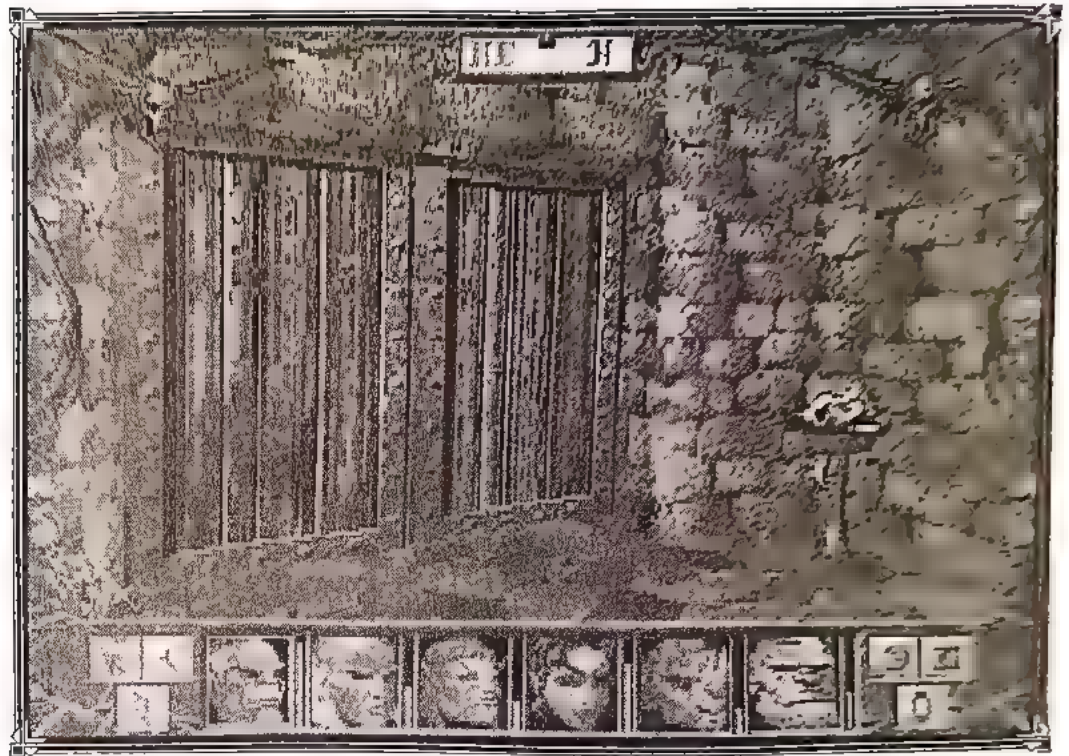
**Figure 3-11.**  
The final fight with  
Droog and his  
henchmen



The double doors on the left (Figure 3-12) open onto stairs leading up to the Vanguard Keep dungeon. Theros has come home, and you're about to meet the enemy on his own turf.

**Figure 3-12.**

The entrance to Vanguard Keep





## Within the Walls of Vanguard Keep

*The party penetrates the dungeons, halls, and towers of Vanguard Keep; kills off one serious monster; and lights up one side of Skelon's Pass.*

### The Dungeon

A shadowy Nocturnal meets the party at the door of the Vanguard Keep dungeons and delivers a speech designed to curdle your blood. Skelon's Pass has fallen. The Nocturnals rule. And the party is worse than dead: It is irrelevant.

This address is meant to scare the pants off you. If you were really doomed, however, the Nocturnal wouldn't bother giving the speech: He'd just kill you. So be heartened by the fact that, not only does he not kill you, he does not even show his face.





Here are a few general tips for dealing with the dungeons:

- ◆ Explore at your leisure. This multi-level prison is straightforward and castle-like in construction, and you should have no trouble finding your way around. The monsters, at least the initial ones, are weenies. The only awkwardness is finding the puzzles.
- ◆ Stay off the floor grates on the upper of the two main levels. They're electrified (as are the barred cell doors on the lower level), and the active character will suffer damage if you make contact.
- ◆ This is where ranged weapons—in particular the Magical Heavy Crossbow—really begin to come in handy. The dungeons are beset with a plague of Cellar Rats, who are as ugly as the Mantis' noise is annoying. It's a good precaution to send a few blind shots into the darkness before you start down a hallway. If you hear a "crunch" sound, follow up the bolts with a few more until you don't hear the "crunch" any more. Two hits, and a rat is an ex-rat.



You'll probably want to start by checking out the moat, or trying to ride the retracting drawbridge over to the doors. That's very clever—but don't do it. The doors beyond the bridge will always be closed and locked by the time you get there, and you'll always be stranded on the sill with your



only refuge being the pit below. You don't want to go in the moat. Really. It contains more Cellar Rats than you can shake a stick at, with no payoff if you escape. You can't even examine the skeleton down there.

It may not seem so at first, but you can escape. Just click on the floor grate at the east end of the moat, and you'll have a chance to drop down into a dark passage.

The good news: You've found a shrewd way to get into the dungeon. If you bear west, through an illusionary wall, you'll find a secret room and ultimately wind up in the southwest corner of the dungeons' second story. We'll cover this later from a different direction. The bad news: You'll find more rats down there in the moat. Let's not, and say we did, eh!





Instead, bear right down the catwalk that fronts the moat and enter the secret door at its end. Get the Cure Disease potion and throw both levers on the wall. (One extends the bridge again and the other opens the doors into the dungeon.) Now you can cross into the dungeon proper.

### *In Search of Keys*

You'll discover quickly that much of the southern part of the dungeon is locked up tight, and the northern section is entirely inaccessible. You need keys, and they come in a couple of different shapes. You can find them with a simple room-to-room search, and a lone prisoner will give you a helpful pointer. He can be encountered either through his door in Cell Block B on this level, or through a grate on the level above (Figure 4-1).



**Figure 4-1.**

The solitary prisoner in the Vanguard Keep dungeons will plead for help and offer a tip, either through this door or the grate in the ceiling.

To make quick work of this search, head north, take the first left and then the first left again. At the end of the hall, take the brick (Figure 4-2). While you're here, use ranged weapons to kill off the Cellar Rats in the cells. It's like shooting fish in a barrel. That way, you won't have to fight them hand-to-hand and risk taking damage when you explore the cells later.





**Figure 4-2.**

This brick needs a brick-shaped hole ...



Head north again, west, and then all the way south. Touch the wall with the missing brick and it will recede, exposing two doors (Figure 4-3).

Save your game. Don't worry: The rooms contain chests, not monsters. However, the equipment in them is random, and if you're unhappy with the payout the first time through, restore and try your luck again.

**Figure 4-3.**

Would you like the door on the left, the door on the right, or the box down on the stage!







If you're persistent, you can make out quite nicely here and collect several items of plate armor. (Either way, you'll also collect around 1,200 G/P.)

Head north again, and enter the first room on the left. That's the Cell Control Room Key on the floor. Take it, and head north up the corridor. Open the last door on the right. Kill the troll warrior inside, open the chest (200 G/P and a random shield) and take the Cure Disease potion and, most particularly, the Jailor's Note. This note lays out the dungeon's power system in some detail and should give you some good ideas. You need to shut this place down.



It's simple now that you've got the key. Visit each of the four locked rooms arrayed about the central junction of corridors and throw the eight switches to shut down power to the eight cell blocks. Be certain all eight are off. (Determine this from the text description of the action that appears onscreen and not the position of the switch, which can be deceptive.)

This will allow you to release the prisoner in Block B, who'll tell you about the treasure room you've already plundered. (Interesting footnote: If you return to the prisoner before freeing him, he'd plead with you desperately that "It's almost feeding time!" and make reference to a "beast." Spooky! What could that be?)

Now you can explore the cells themselves. Most are empty, but one just across from the prisoner's cell contains a Cure Disease potion. The southernmost cell in Block D holds a musket, a rapier, and Major Heal and Cure Disease potions in a secret cubbyhole.

## ***Secrets and Surprises***

This is also a good time to explore the rest of the southern section of the dungeons. For instance, we haven't even looked at the upper level yet. It's pretty much empty, except for the rats, but you just might want to check out the down passage in the southwest corner. These two ramps lead to an illusionary wall and, beyond that, to a series of mossy chambers.

There are lots of rats down here, especially off to the east where you dropped into the dungeon if you used the moat. Fortunately, a long corridor is between you and them, and you should be able to pick off many with ranged weapons before they close on you.

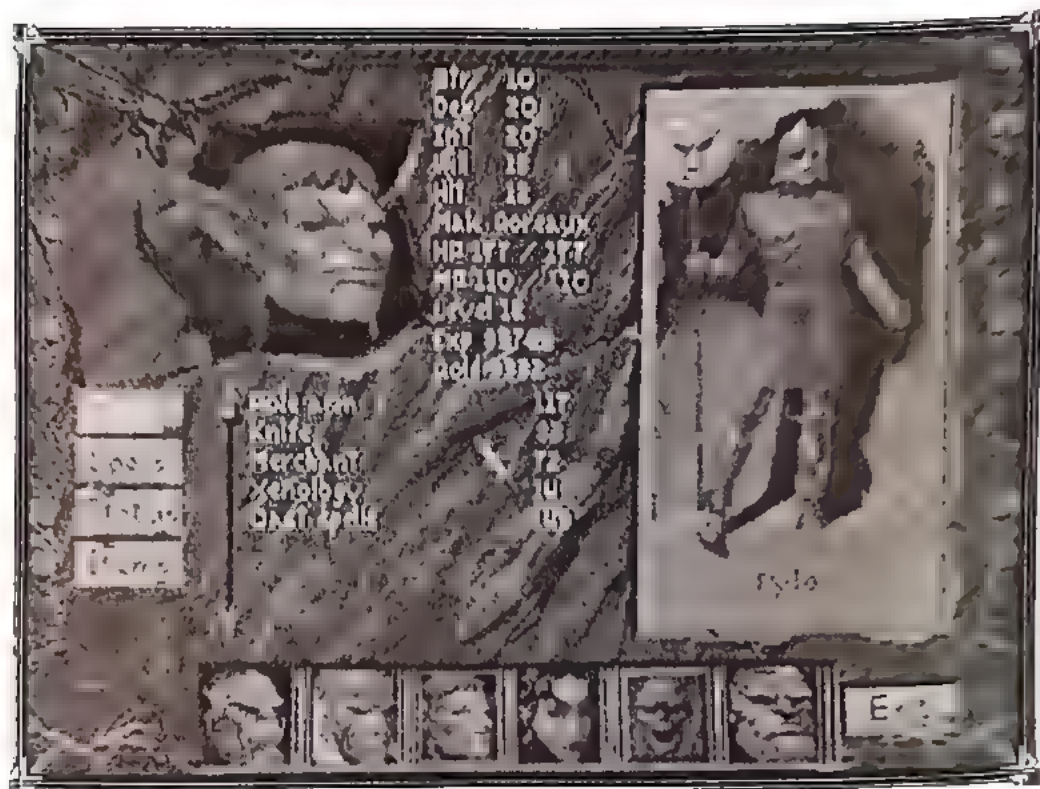
Still, what's the point of coming down here? All these rooms are empty! Well, there's a secret door in the south wall at the bend in the descending passage. In this bloodstained room, you'll find a long bow, a



Dreamer, a Katana, and yet another Cure Disease potion. The Dreamer is a real find. It adds 15 points to the user's Pole Arm skill and casts a Sleep spell on those it strikes (Figure 4-4).

**Figure 4-4.**

The Dreamer: It's good for fighting and it helps the enemy catch a few Zs.



## What Else?

Other areas of interest? There's the dining hall in the dungeon's southeast corner, which is the probable source of the trolls you're finding in the halls from time to time. However, the only place really worthy of attention here is the locked storage room at the rear—pick the lock—where you'll find Herbal Remedy (which gives the user six more hit points) and two Cure Disease potions. (The two torture chambers, which flank the path to the northern section of dungeon, are more scenic stopovers than anything. Take a look at the Iron Maiden.)

## Fight! Fight!

At this point, the gate that provides access to the north dungeon is still locked tight. As the Jailor's Note reveals, that's a function of the security system. To open the gates, you'll need to restore the power—hit the same eight switches you used to turn it off—and then pull the lever beside the gate.



Save your game and step through the opening. You will immediately regret it. (Then again, you have no choice.) Three Smoke Demons emerge from rooms to the east and west.

Uh-oh. These guys aren't some Nocturnal-once-removed apes. They are the real thing—walking nightmares and capable spellcasters whose incantations often hit the full party, and hit it hard.

Of course, you know your way around a spell or two at this stage of the game. Hit them with everything you've got—Lightning Bolt spells at high mana work well—and save your game afterward. Two more demons lurk behind another gate to the north, but these can be shot down with ranged weapons. (Just be patient. This can take a while.)

## Party on Tour

Open the gate and head west ... carefully. The corridor opens into a large and bad-smelling room with sloping, slippery sides, and a deep drain at its center. Fall in, and everyone in the party will be hurt and have to change their clothes. (Just kidding about the clothes.) Stay close to the wall and move quickly and directly between the doors, and you should be fine.

The southern door leads to a corridor with a nice cathedral ceiling, a small army of trolls, and some minor items in five cells: Healing potions, Cure Poison and Mana Bolt scrolls, a small shield, and a short sword.

The west door takes you into a foyer with exits to south, west, and north. The room to the south requires a key and the one to the west is empty. So pick the lock on the north door and enter the Armory. (If you still don't have a good lock picker, return after you find the Armory key elsewhere on this level.) Kill the two Smoke Demon guards and pick up everything in sight: Battle Axe, Bardiche, buckler, rapier, war hammer, fur boot and chest armor, broad sword, medium shield, chain coif, chest and leg armor, and a nasty-looking dagger called Shadowblade. (This weapon raises the user's Knife skill by 20 and Stealth skill by 10, and it also increases the chance of delivering a damaging "critical hit.")

Return to the drain room, and go through the north doors. Hey, it's sort of comfy-looking here, what with the hearth and bookshelf. Get the Keep Warden's Note at the right side of the fireplace, and check the hearth itself to examine the remains of burned documents—one with a reference to hidden archives.





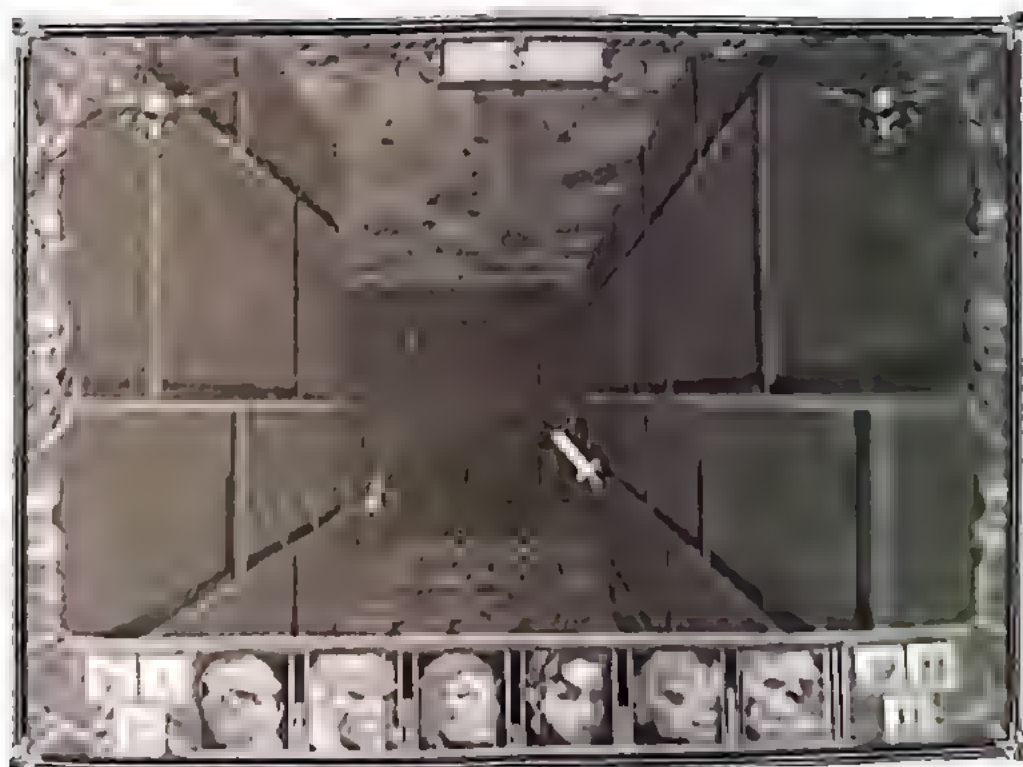


Check the wall at the left side of fireplace for a hidden button (Figure 4-5). Press it, and a button will appear in the bookshelf beyond you. Press this second button, and secret doors will open in chambers to the southwest and southeast (Figure 4-6). In these and adjoining rooms, you'll

**Figure 4-5.**  
A hidden button



**Figure 4-6.**  
The book found in  
this hidden room  
can improve a char-  
acter's Lock Picking  
skill.

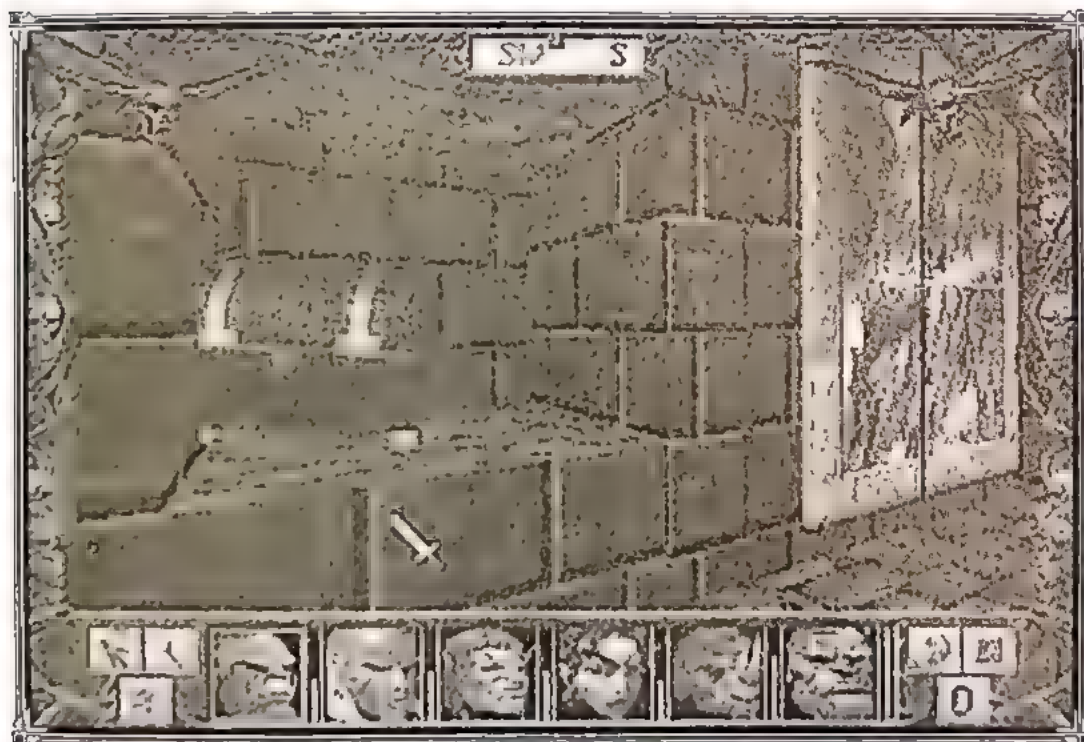




find the Warden's Key, Enlightenment Elixir (which raises a character's intelligence by one point) and a tome called *Annals of a Rogue*, along with some cash and lesser items.

Be careful with this book (and with books in general). You will need a high-level lock picker to complete *Thunderscape*, and if you've neglected that skill so far, this is a way to get back on track. The book can increase the user's Lock Picking skill by 25 points. However, since it's a book, you may be tempted to hold it over the "use" button to examine it, as you do with other documents. That has the effect of using up its skills advantage. Use a book only after you have the appropriate character highlighted.

The Warden's Key allows you to enter the locked room to the south of the Armory. Drop the three Smoke Demons within, and move the painting—what is that anyway!—to reveal a secret cache (Figure 4-7). Get the Portcullis Key, the Healing potion, a Magical Long Sword and 1,000 GP from the chest. You'll also find a Flash scroll hidden in the bookcase.



**Figure 4-7.**

The art of hiding stuff: A painting conceals a secret horde in the warden's office.

The Portcullis Key unlocks the lever controlling the central gates that lead north toward the entrance to the keep's halls. But it's a little early for that, so move on to the east.



## You're So Square

You'll soon reach a square area with walls emblazoned with strange hand-painted emblems (Figure 4-8) and equipped with disconcerting effects. For instance, if you head south, or north and then east, you'll have the sense of pushing back the wall in front of you. In fact, if you keep an eye on the compass and your map position, you'll see you are being teleported to another, similar location within the square.

The effect is to keep you away from rooms east and south of the square. For the moment, you can ignore this dilemma because other areas are available for exploration. Head north from the square, take the corridor on the left, and open the door on your right. Kill the trolls inside and find the

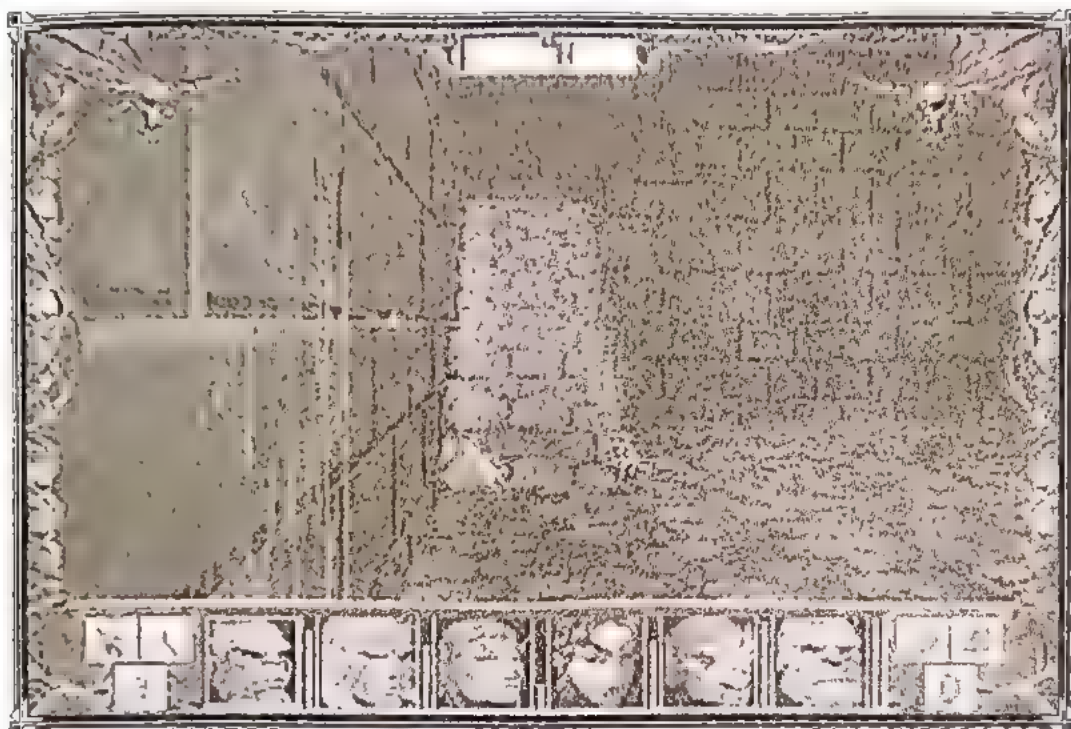
loose brick in the north wall. Push it, and walls will descend to expose a raised area to the northwest. Kill the three troll warriors, who will jump down to fight with you, and leave the room by the same route you entered. Enter the room to the west, push the button on the wall, and then return to the room where you fought the trolls. A stairway now leads up to the raised area (Figure 4-9). Climb it and claim your reward: Ruck's Casque, Cuirass, and Greaves (a superb suit of armor), a glaive and a chest holding 175 GP.



**Figure 4-8.**  
This piece brought  
\$200,000 in Soho.







**Figure 4-9.**  
A great suit of armor rests at the top of these stairs.

Leave by the east door and open the door to the north. Push the button on the west wall, take the hand gun and the Thief's Ring (which increases Knife and Lock Picking skills by 20) from the table, and empty the chest in the corner. (It contains a random potion or scroll and 350 C/P.)

The passage in the east wall takes you to the library (Figure 4-10). Have some fun here, and check out each of the different shelves for a description of the books. Click on the wall above the small bookshelf on



**Figure 4-10.**  
Don't shelve your plans to visit the library.



the east wall to find a secret compartment containing a Haste potion and a Slow Spellbook. Finally, checking the two full-sized shelves along the same wall, in each case, will open a secret door. (Remember the fragment you found in the fireplace that referred to hidden archives!)

The left-hand secret room, full of books about combat, contains a Poison Dart scroll, and checking one of the shelves here raises a character's Martial Arts skill by 20 points.

The right-hand secret room houses books about magic, and here, by clicking on two shelves, you can enhance a character's Xenology and Cast Spells skills, respectively.

You can also drop into the pit at the center of the square—if only out of curiosity. The exits will take you back to locations as diverse as the area north of the mess hall, the northeast corner of the upper level (you'll need to throw a switch to get there) and, through two illusionary walls, to the corridor north of the pit.

The illusionary walls should give you an idea of how to get into those inaccessible areas east and south of the square.

Any guesses? No! There's another illusionary wall at the top of the pit. To get through, you'll need to mount a running jump from the corridor to the north. You'll land in an east-west corridor loaded with trolls. Once they're dead, start gathering up your embarrassment of riches: Keep Armory Key, Magical Short Sword, falchion, Cure Disease, Healing, and Mana potions, and, between three chests, 1,175 GP. Jump back to the square the way you came.

The good news: You're just about ready to take on the next level. The bad news: The Smoke Demons have ganged up to stop you from getting there. Depending on how long you dallied in this region, you may find up to five of them lying in wait, and doing the bump, in the corridor west of the pit.

You have a couple of options at this point. You can avoid the demons entirely by using the illusionary door to the north to reach the area just north of the mess hall. (Just be quick about it, and don't make any side trips. The demons will eventually figure out where you are and follow.) Or you can use spells and ranged weapons to weaken them from a distance, and then use the tight confines of the "square" area to limit the number you face at one time.

You'll still have to face the Smoke Demons beyond the Portcullis, but these, too, can be handled with the crossbow. Just keep firing until they're all dead, then open the gates and move onward and upward.





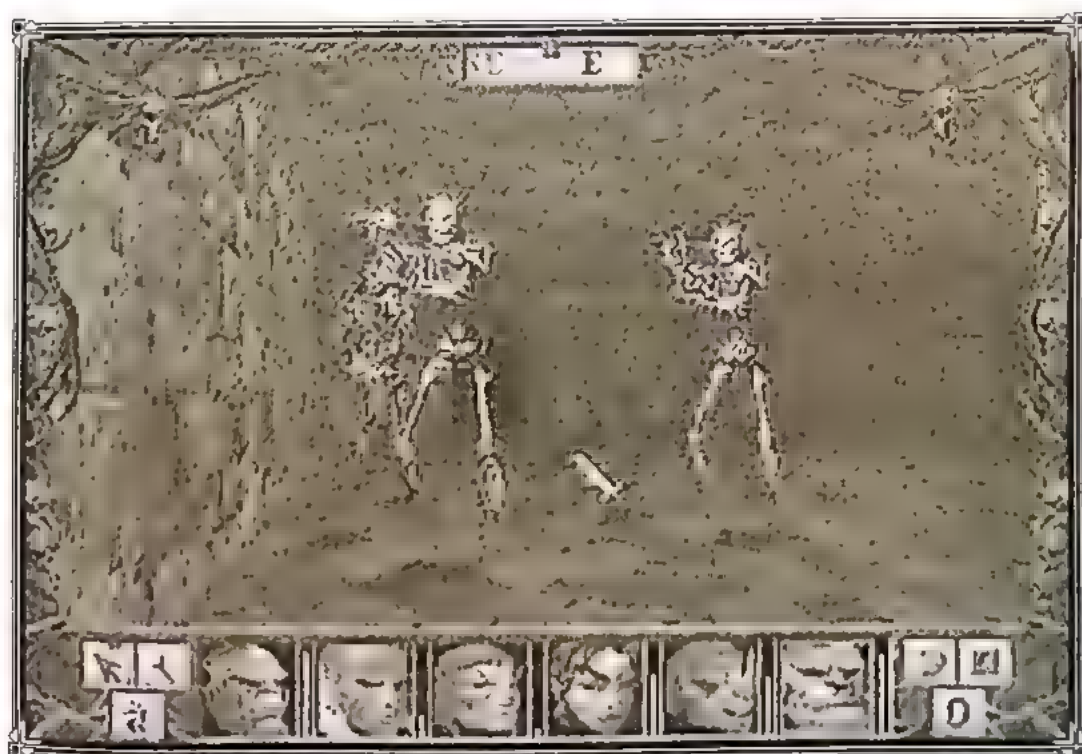


## The Halls

The moment you enter the central hall, Theros notices that something is amiss. The corridor that once led north to the towers is gone. It's been replaced by four locks and a great wooden wheel—called a Capstan—at the room's center. This is the mechanism that opens the path to the keep's towers, your next destination. Your task is to find the four keys. We'll tackle that first, and then move on to some other features of the level.

Here's some advice for living through the Vanguard Keep Halls:

- ◆ Put your party in a crouch and keep it there for the whole level. It looks a little silly—it's like you're fighting monsters' belly buttons—and it's probably a killer on the knees. But it will spare the party from taking damage from the spellcasting machines that dot the halls. (You've seen them before. Droog had one in his elevator.) You can shut off at least some of them by pressing buttons at map coordinates 58, 29, 627; 4, 28, 652; and 25, 46, 627.
- ◆ Don't burden yourself unnecessarily with found equipment, but do collect the broad swords that skeletons leave behind. They're worth a pretty penny back at Finea's shop (Figure 4-11).



**Figure 4-11.**

Pick up after the skeletons. Their broad swords are worth big bucks.





- ◆ Check out the fountains. Some of 'em stink, some of 'em heal and others have useful spell effects (like Haste and Armor).
- ◆ This is a very extensive level, with an upstairs and a downstairs, but don't get sucked into a room-by-room search. There isn't that much to find. The few valuable items that don't connect with the story are covered at the end of this section.
- ◆ The monsters that find you—Raveners, Skeletons and Red Hellcats—are plentiful and fierce. Save frequently.

### *The "A" Key*

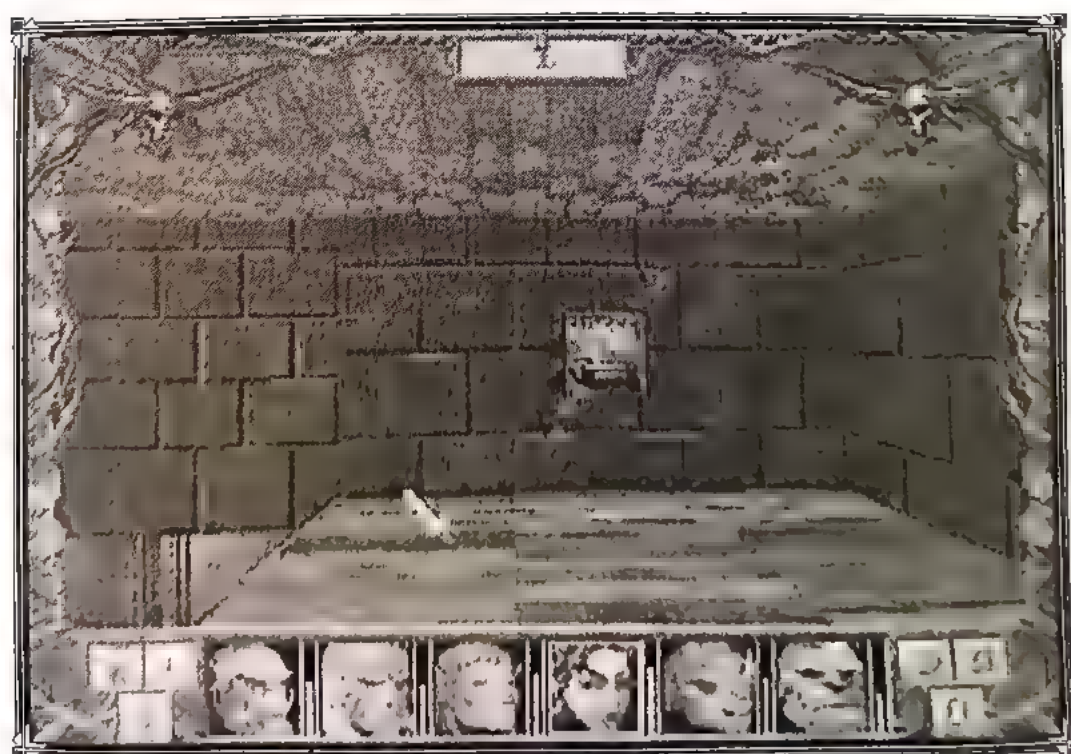
Once you fend off the attacks of the centaur-like Raveners from the west and east, follow the main corridors west and then immediately north (stopping to loot a Ravener hangout containing two chests). Go west and then north again at the fountain.

You'll come to a set of big double doors. Enter this meeting room, head north, and kill the skeletons that move to meet you. Climb the stairs onto the platform at the room's southern end and throw the switch on the east wall (Figure 4-12).



**Figure 4-12.**

This switch allows you to reach the "A" key. Unfortunately, it also releases skeletons.





Descend again and kill the skeletons that emerge from the room to the northeast. Enter the room, and get the Capstan Room Key A and empty the chest. On the way out, pick the lock on the door across the hall and get the Poison Dart scroll inside. Pretty simple, right?

### The "B" Key

The "B" key is a bit more of a jaunt. Following the perimeter corridors, go all the way west and all the way south. (On the way south, pick the locked door to the east and get the chest within.) Finally, head east and open the double doors you'll find just past the fountain.

Enter this ruined workshop, kill the two skeletons, and collect the Beacon Master's Key and Note and a Healing potion. Read the note and have a look at the bookshelf. The Nocturnals were looking for something here, and they seem to have found it.

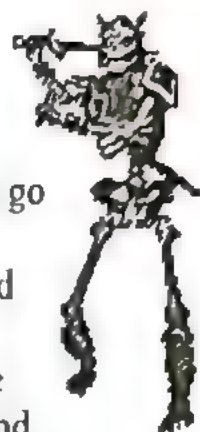
Make your way back to the Capstan room, and give the wheel a clockwise turn. You'll hear the rattle of chains. (A gate is being raised to the northeast on the upper level.)

Exit to the east and head north to the stairs. A pack of Red Hellcats is waiting for you at the top. This is a red-furred, spellcasting version of the Mountain Cat from Skelon's Gorge and is best dealt with at a distance.

So ready your Magic Heavy Crossbow, save the game, and then run up the flight and keep running until you reach a bend in the corridor. When you get there, turn and start firing. You should be able to take out or weaken most of the Hellcats before they get close enough to hit you.

When you get rid of the Hellcats, backtrack to the west and you'll see a set of double doors off to the north. Go through these and you'll find yourself on a balcony overlooking a teleporter. Take the Keep Library Key and the Mana potion, and throw the switch on the wall to activate the device. Jump over the railing, climb the ramp, and enter the now-glowing teleporter.

Zap. You're now on the balcony overlooking the workshop. Kill the skeletons, take the Discipline Elixir and the chest, and search the rest of the enclosure to find the Capstan Room Key B and a Mana Bolt scroll.





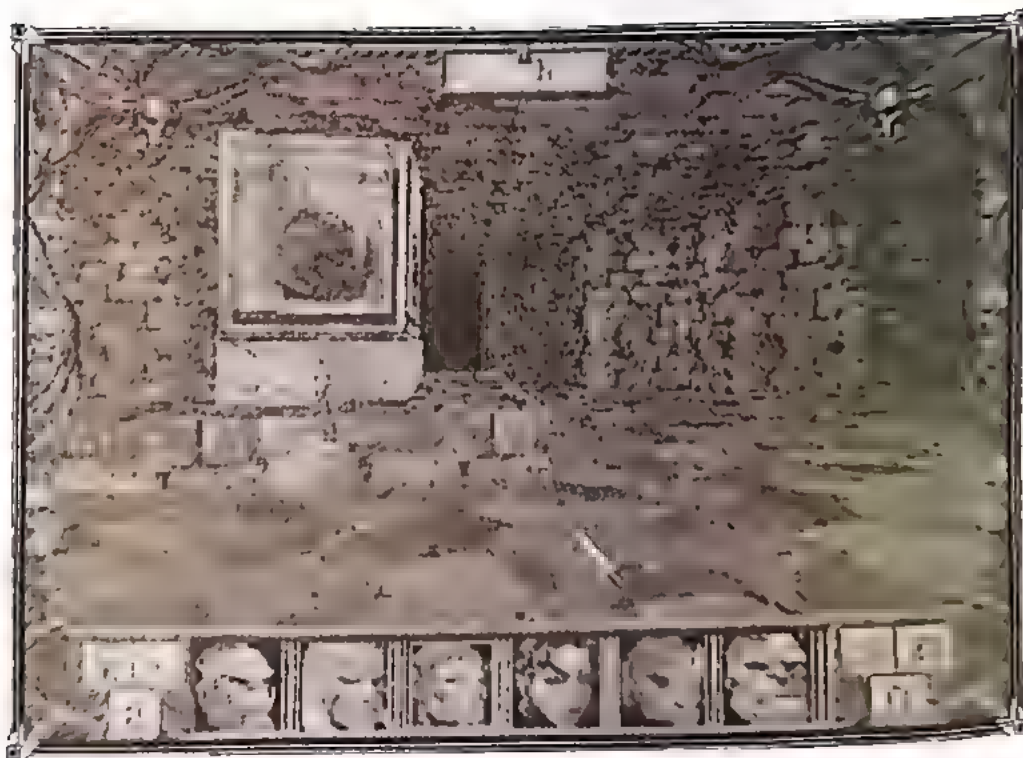
### The "C" Key

This one is actually the easiest of the four keys to reach, but it can prove a little hard to find on your own because of the large area involved. Return to the Capstan room, and give the wheel another clockwise turn. This opens the gates giving access to the northern section of the downstairs halls and the southern section of the upstairs halls. You're headed for the northern section.

Exit to the west, take the first passage north, and bear east at the end. Make a left just before you reach the stairs and, lo and behold, you'll find the "C" key lying a short distance ahead (Figure 4-13). Grab it, and head back to the Capstan room.

**Figure 4-13.**

This key's just lying around for anyone to pick up.



### The "D" Key

Turn the wheel clockwise one final time. This opens the southern halls downstairs. Exit to the west, head south, west again and south again, and open the door on your right.

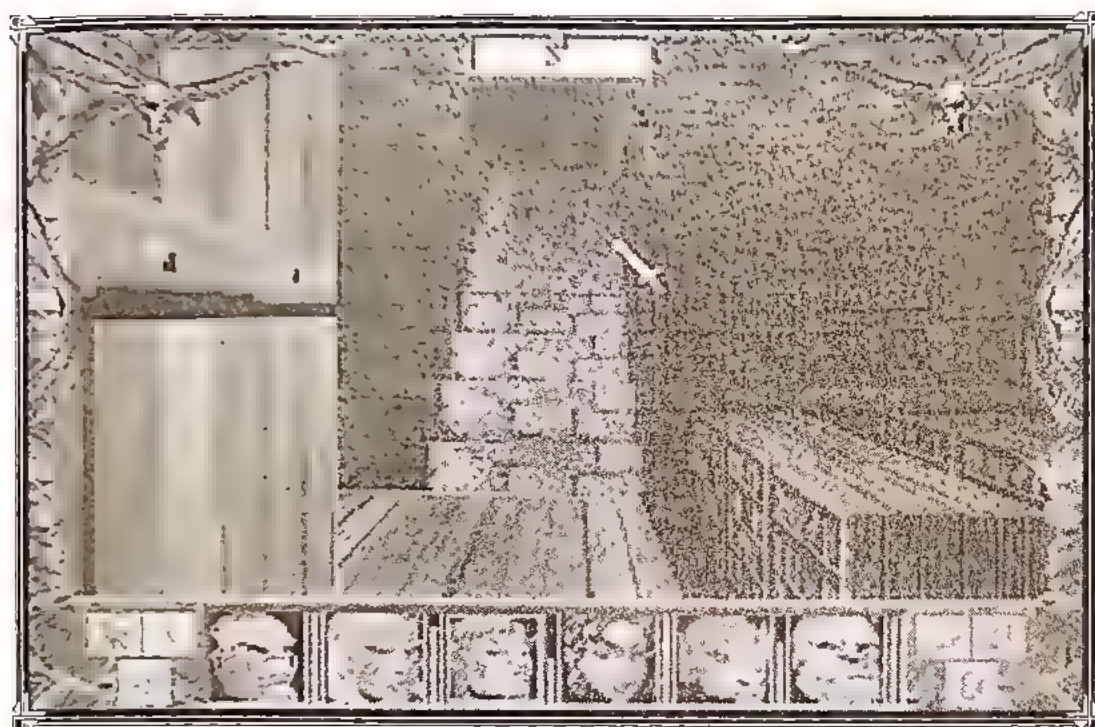
It's the library: the perfect place for the Nocturnals to keep the books from the workshop! Kill the Ravens browsing here, climb up to the catwalk, and make a circuit of the room. Here you'll find a cutlass and book called *The Duelist's Craft* that will enhance a character's fencing skill 50 points!







You should also find a loose board that, when touched, triggers the appearance of a set of stairs leading up into the ceiling (Figure 4-14). Here, you'll find the "D" key, an Aid Spellbook (which teaches a character the Aid spell—a partywide healer) and a note from someone named Wynchon. It's required reading, for it sets up your objectives for your conquest of Vanguard Keep's towers.



**Figure 4-14.**

A stairway to heaven in the key of "D"

### *And the Rest?*

There is more than just keys to the Vanguard Keep Halls. A number of rooms contain chests with cash and rudimentary items that I haven't cited here—usually because they're off the beaten track and not enticing enough to require a special trip.

However, the Halls do contain a number of locations that are worth visiting. Here's a checklist:

- ◆ Take the stairs to the second floor, go all the way east and all the way south, and look for a secret door in the southern wall. Inside, you'll find the Chamberlain's Key (which opens every locked door on this level), gold chain chest armor, and a chain coif.



- ◆ From there, go all the way north and all the way west, and open the last door on the left. Here you'll find a stiletto, a Healing potion and, most particularly, Shadow Boots, which add 25 points to a character's Stealth skill and 15 points to Knife.
- ◆ In the far northeast corner of the halls, behind double doors, is an intriguing suite of rooms. The level of detail here—mural, table, braziers, a chest with 1,000 GP—suggests the presence of something more substantial. And so there is. Check the bookshelf, and pull the lever you find there. The shelf will slide back to reveal an elevator. If you can defeat the skeletons at the bottom, you'll have access to a real treasure room containing Roscoe's Belt (which adds five HP to the wearer), a medium shield, plate chest and leg armor, a full suit of plate armor, a glaive, and an evil-looking sword called Thunderclap that adds 30 points to the user's Sword skill.
- ◆ The area just northeast of the Capstan room holds an interesting magic item called Lightning Rod (which casts the Lightning Bolt spell) and a chest containing 1,000 GP. The problem: The room is absolutely packed with Raveners and skeletons, and it may not be worth the effort.
- ◆ The southeast corner also has a unique chamber: a barn-like structure where you can find a long spear and an Armor potion. (If you favor pole weapons, a trident and halberd can also be found in the northern and southern sections of the halls, respectively.)

All set? Use the four keys on the locks in the Capstan room, and double doors will appear in the north wall. Throw the switch on the block that rises behind you to open the doors. The way to the Towers is now clear.

## *The Towers*

Theros is leaving the party. The moment you move to enter the Towers, he drops his possessions in a neat pile at the door and runs off to draw off the demons on your trail.

You won't know whether to thank him for this service or curse him out, for his departure really couldn't come at a worse time. The Towers is not only the toughest area yet, but it's also the first area you won't feel like the master of your destiny. It doesn't even have the virtue of conventionality—it's more like a hive than a castle—and seems like one long dark hallway.



Not to worry! If you can work your way into the Towers a bit, you'll find a decent replacement. (Remember the news you found in the workshop about a Nocturnal captive!) And if you take a few precautionary steps along the way, it won't be so bad.

However, if a sense of inadequacy persists, you can always return to Finea's shop in Skelon's Gorge. (It may seem like a long trip, but the Vanguard Keep leg of the trek is almost a straight line.) Sell off any unnecessary equipment. Upgrade any weapons that need upgrading. (Get the Magical Battle Axe for any axe-wielding characters). Stock up on Healing potions.

When you first enter the Towers, you will find yourself in the outer of the two concentric rings of hallways. This one is dark and often appears empty. Trust me: It's not. There are any number of rooms and items concealed just off the beaten track. It's just a matter of knowing how to get to them. Keep an eye peeled for buttons on the walls.

## The Outer Ring

Sit through the little speech from the Dark One (he compliments you on your persistence, but does not offer you an entry-level position) and then bear west (Figure 4-15). Kill the Smoke Demons who approach from west and east and continue on until you find a button on the left-hand wall.



**Figure 4-15.**  
The Dark One speaks.





This lowers a section of wall just to the west, exposing a recess and another button. Push this as well, and immediately upon doing so, turn around and press your back into the recess as far as possible. The monsters you've just freed—some combination of Smoke Demons and Wraiths—can't negotiate the step up required to reach you, and you may be able to get off several shots with ranged weapons before they're able to engage you from a distance.

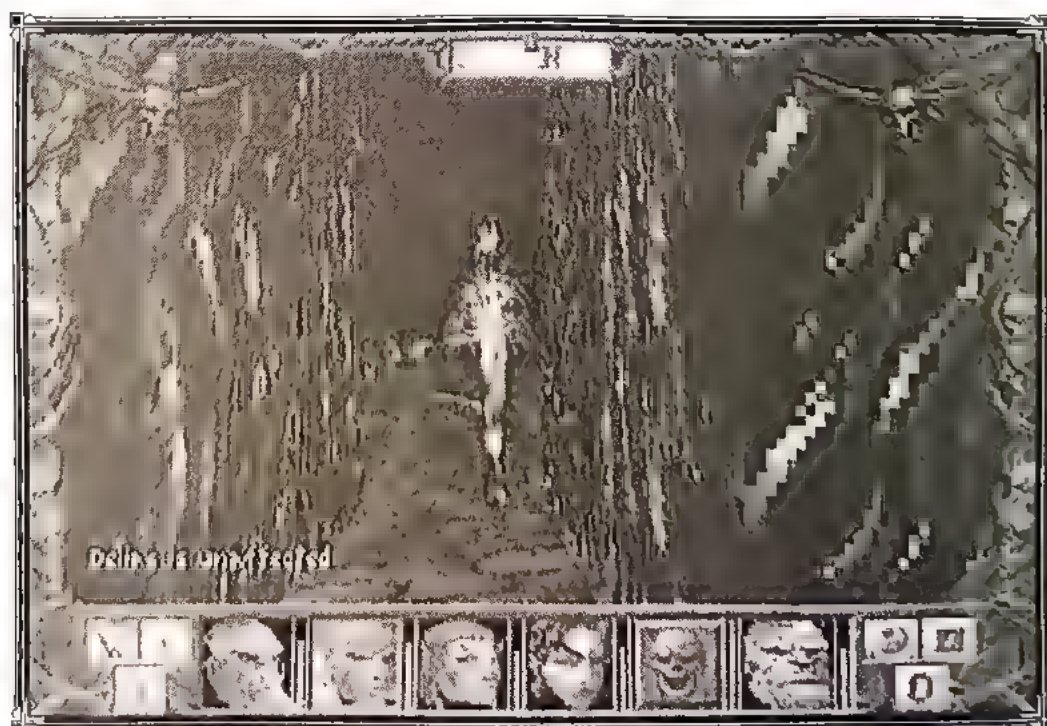
Ignore the teleporter to the northwest—you'll only get hurt if you use teleporters at this stage—but do have a look at the sign beside the entrance. (It's a hint that there's a way to make them work.) Turn around; and use ranged weapons to gun down the two Wraiths on the bridge to the northeast. (We'll look at this hateful new monster more closely in a moment.)

Just past the teleporter, look for a button on a north wall. Push it and ride the elevator it activates up to a small platform. Don't be too quick to enter the passage that descends steeply to the west. There's treasure down there, but also a den of Wraiths—one of several in the Towers. These flame-like creatures are weak (75 HP), but they are also brutal when encountered in packs. They cast the Slow spell, which will prevent affected characters from launching an attack, and the Death spell, which annihilates a character regardless of how many hit points he or she may have (Figure 4-16).



**Figure 4-16.**

Wraiths, ya hate 'em, right?





The Slow spell can be neutralized with Dispel, but you can't really answer the Death spell except by not giving the Wraiths a chance to cast it. The solution is to obliterate them in the first couple of combat rounds or limit the number you fight at one time. If you get a break during the combats, and the party is intact, save your game. Once the passage is clear, you can descend and collect a suit of plate armor and a Bastard Sword. (By now, virtually everyone in the party should be decked out in plate armor.) Continue to follow the passage (which by now is heading south) and you'll eventually see a cavity in the ceiling. Yes, there's an even higher level. You'll eventually have to find a way up there.

Further south, look for a button on the west wall just before you reach the teleport. Push it. The platform just to the south will descend, and two Smoke Demons will be in your face. Kill them, and take the Cure Disease potion and Klesa's Ring from the enclosure. Klesa's Ring will probably prove a mystery to you, as it has no discernible effect on party members' skills or stats. Give it to the character who appears to be taking the worst beating from the monsters; you'll find that the ring will improve the rate at which he or she heals.

The passage turns east after the next teleport. Look on the southern wall just east of the teleport, and you'll find a button. Push it and the platform to the west will be lowered to reveal a wall. You'll find a secret panel in this wall that conceals a Mana potion and a Fireball scroll.

Now, here's a neat trick: Stay on the platform and press the button again. It will rise to its original position, and you'll be able to reach the platform on the north side of the passage with a running jump. Save your game before you leap. It's a long way across, and you'll probably need to make many attempts. After you land, collect the Herbal Remedy and the Hand Cannon—a great ranged weapon that can reel off multiple shots.

Continue east, and you should eventually receive a report of a faint cry that seems to come from the stones. You'll have to knock off four more Smoke Demons—who sandwich you from east and west—before you can go check it out.







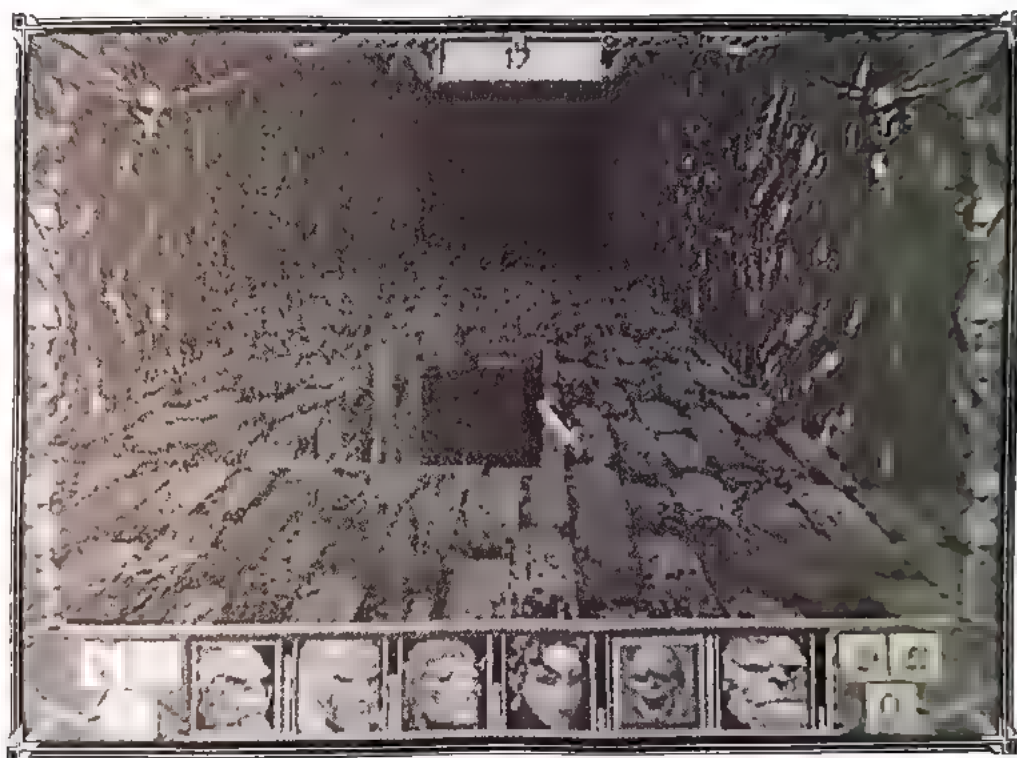
## New Allies



After the battle, search the north wall for another button and push it. Two descending stairways will open in the floor behind you (Figure 4-17). Kill the two Demons who guard this dungeon, and meet the elf Selene—the acolyte whose capture you read of at the workshop in the Halls (Figure 4-18). She explains the corruption of the shield beacons and offers to help. Add her to the party; Selene is well-versed in Knife, Stealth, and Cast Spells skills and brings her own armor and daggers. (So what if she's a dead ringer for Finca!)

**Figure 4-17.**

You'll find a new recruit in this concealed dungeon.

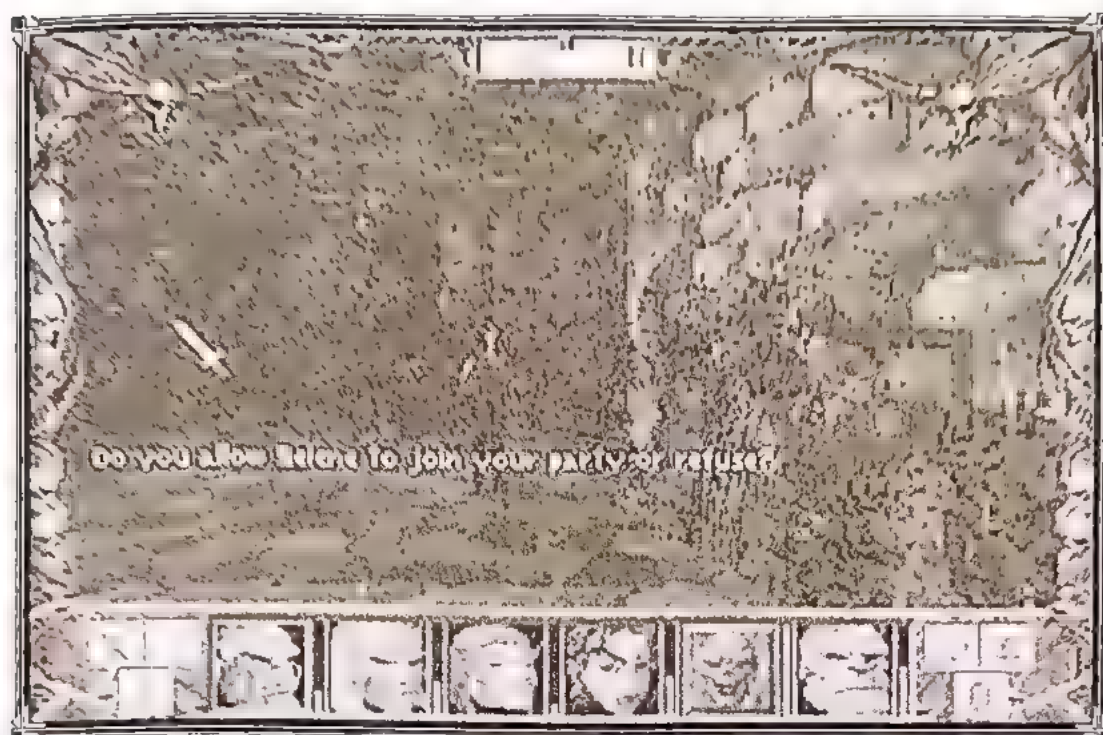


A curiosity: If you turn Selene down, she'll tell you more than she does if you accept her. (She mentions that the Dark One keeps the original crystals in the throne room on the upper level.)

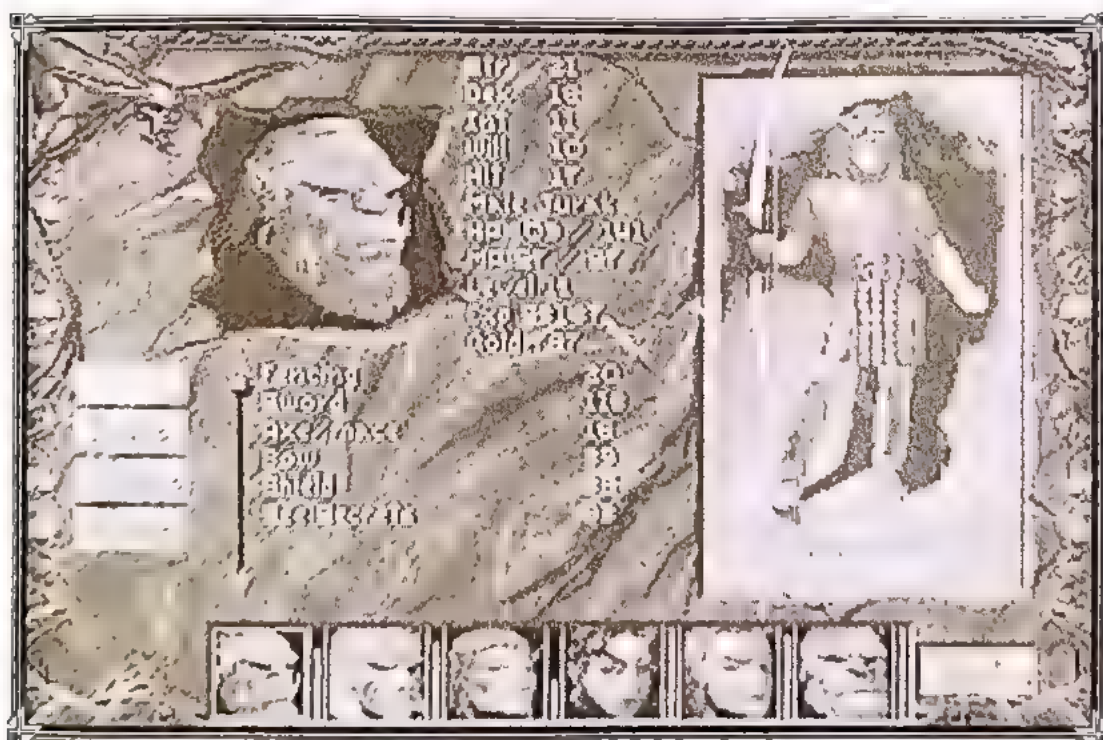
Be on your toes down here, for things are about to get hairy again. Continue east and use ranged weapons to shoot down the Wraiths in the raised area at the bend in the corridor. Then backtrack a bit to the west and look for a button on the north wall of the corridor. This button will lower the raised area to the east just enough for you to jump up on it. Get the Cure Disease potion and the Crystal Bow (Figure 4-19).







**Figure 4-18.**  
Theros' replacement.  
Unfortunately, she  
doesn't last long.



**Figure 4-19.**  
The Crystal Bow is  
one of a number of  
fine weapons found  
in the outer ring of  
the Vanguard Keep  
Towers.

You can also use this platform to mount another running jump to the north. Once you land, have a look at the northwest corner of the walls. It looks odd, right, almost as though there's something behind it! Sure enough, if you click on the wall, you'll open a hidden cupboard containing an Elixir of Fortitude and a Main-Gauche dagger.



## To the North with Caution

The further you progress north from here, the more you risk bringing down a whole army of Wraiths on your head as well as a storm of Death spells, some of which can't help but succeed (Figure 4-20).

Figure 4-20.

This sort of ugly thing can happen when you fight too many Wraiths at the same time.



So adopt our time-honored Six-Step Program for Wraith Extermination:

- 1) Draw the Wraiths' attention, but do not engage.
- 2) Retreat into areas already clear of enemies.
- 3) Use ranged weapons to knock down the strength of the Wraiths that follow you.
- 4) Repeat 2 & 3 as needed.
- 5) Finish off the Wraiths.
- 6) Save your game, and repeat as needed.





## We'd Rather Fight and Switch

You're about to embark on an orgy of button-pushing and switch-throwing. Once the Wraiths have been cleared out, go all the way north. (Pass the platform with the green button, you can't get up there yet.)

Then look for a raised area against the north wall, and hop up onto the platform. Open the secret door, kill the three Wraiths inside this hidden chamber and throw the switch on the east wall.

This action will activate the elevator that takes the party up to the platform with the green button just to the south. That green button, in turn, opens up a staircase in the corridor floor to the south. (You can jump across the corridor from this platform and grab a Healing potion and a Breathe Fire scroll.)

Descend the stairs and kill the four Wraiths. There's no room for finesse here—just charge into their midst, launch a pair of Lightning Bolt spells in the first round of combat, and pray that they don't get off a successful Death spell in return.

## Don't Fear the Reaper

Afterward, throw the switch on the south wall. This unlocks the secret door in the east wall. Here, you'll find two more Wraiths and, beyond them, a scythe called Reaper. Don't be too quick to grab it, or you'll miss Selene's take on this evil artifact. (And you know it must be important because two Smoke Demons appear at the base of the stairs the moment you step toward it.)

This scythe is, in fact, the only real artifact that you've found in the Towers, and you can be fairly certain that it's bound up in some way with your passage from the outer ring to the Towers' inner circle. Exit this little sub-dungeon and try using the Reaper on the teleport to the north.







This does the trick! As soon as you apply the scythe, all four teleports will light up (Figure 4-21). Step into the pentagram, and you'll find yourself materializing into an even darker place than the outer ring.

**Figure 4-21.**

Use the Reaper on the teleport skull, and it'll make a happy face.



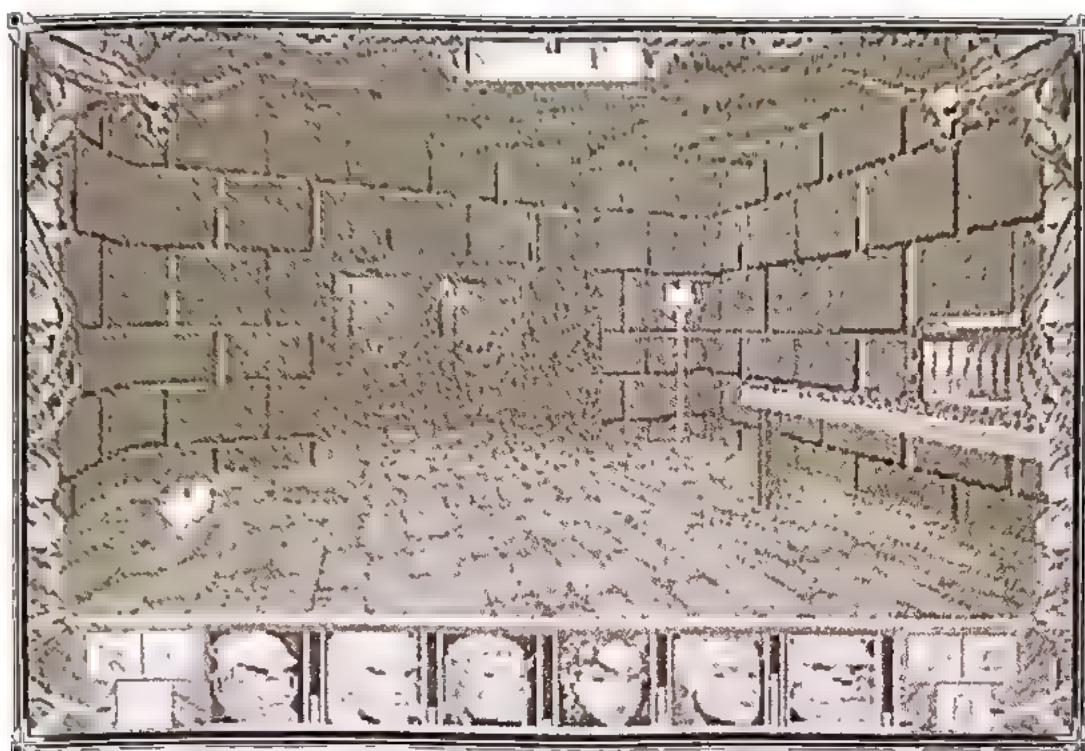
## *The Inner Circle*

The end is close—very close—but so is the end of the party if you don't mind your Ps & Qs.

First off, don't go wandering around this mausoleum-like level aimlessly. The inner sanctum of Vanguard Keep is rich in Smoke Demons, and you need to find a safe haven where you can fight them on your own terms. (You can always retreat to the outer ring via the teleporter, but you never know quite what you're going to find when you return.)

The room just north of the teleport where you arrive is well-suited to this task (Figure 4-22). Empty the chest of its 350 GP and random scroll and check out the shelf on the desk for an interesting passage that sets up your visit to the Dwarven city of Karegh-Konan later in the game. (Look at all such desks on this level. There's a wealth of information to be found there.)



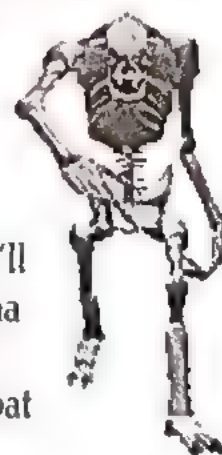


**Figure 4-22.**

Your little hide-away from a cold and cruel world

While you are in this room, the Smoke Demons sense your presence and begin to collect outside the doors. (Thank goodness they're not smart enough to open them!) If the party's in reasonably good health, charge into the fray. With the addition of Selene to the party, you should now have three solid spell casters, and all of them casting Lightning Bolt at a high mana level should decimate the demons' numbers in a hurry.

Once you've cleared out the demons, you can explore. You'll run into one or two more in the halls, but don't waste your mana on them. The party should be about Level 12 by now, and well enough equipped to chew through a demon's 150 HP in a combat round without spells.

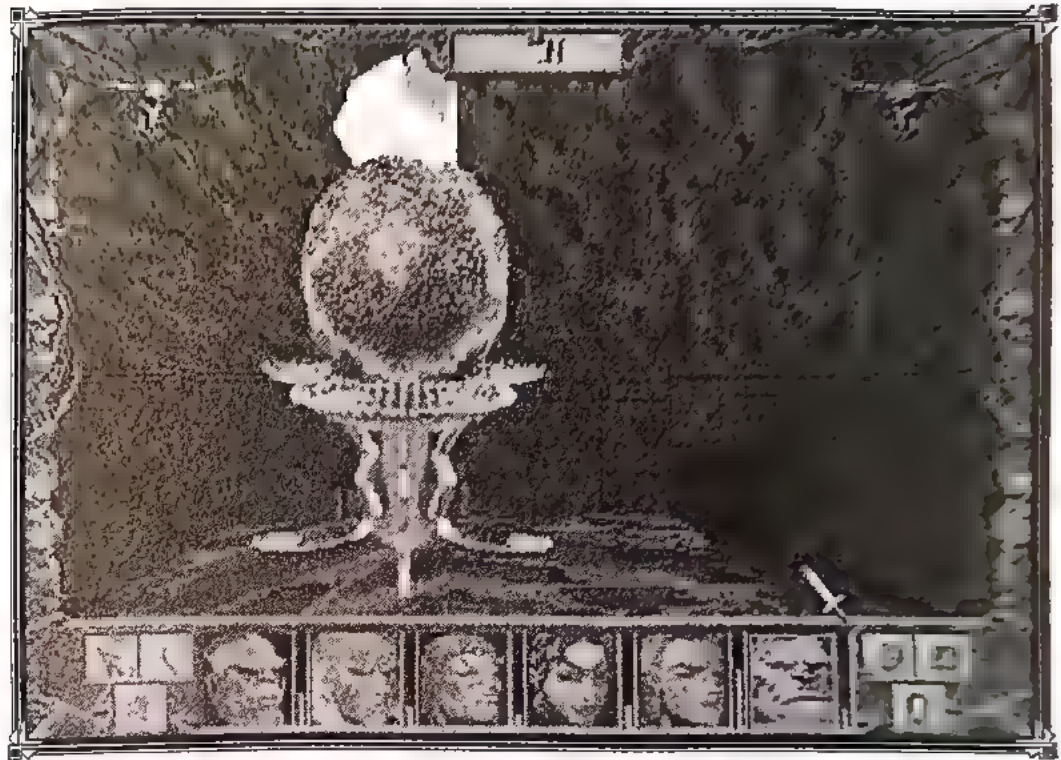






To the north, atop a great pyramid, is one of the beacons. If you approach it, Selene will tell you to clear off—touching the corrupted crystal at the top would kill you (Figure 4-23). She's exaggerating a bit, but you would suffer heavy damage. So take her advice.

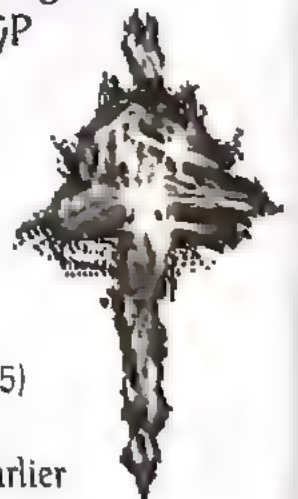
**Figure 4-23.**  
You light up my ...  
shield!



However, you're ill-equipped to follow the rest of her directions to explore the level's central area. You need to search the surrounding rooms first.

Once the demons in the hallways are gone, the search becomes surprisingly easy. Enter the double doors north of this beacon and fight off the two demons. Inside, take the red crystal and the 175 GP in the chest and, again, look at the bookshelf (Figure 4-24). Leave by the east doors and pass through the double doors to the northeast. Beyond these doors, you will find chests holding 250 GP and a variety of random equipment. The shield is the real winner here: It's a Tower Shield that protects the user from head to toe.

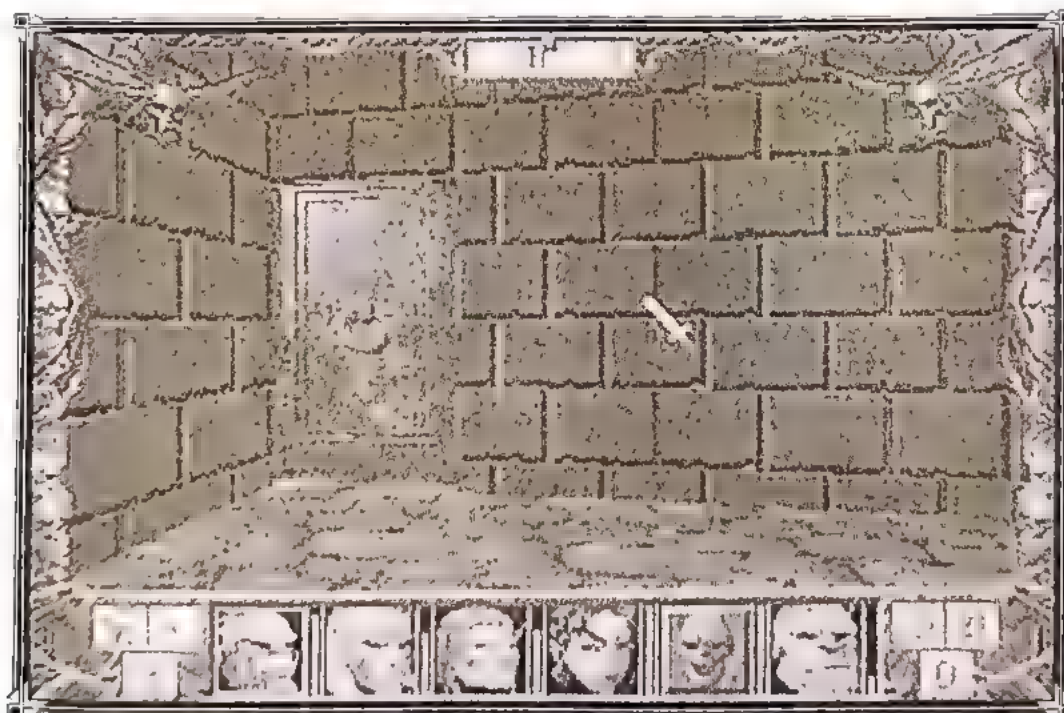
The door in the northeast corner of the room (Figure 4-25) leads onto one of the platforms above the outer ring. Do you remember this platform? The Wraiths used it to harass you earlier in the game.







**Figure 4-24.**  
Search the rooms  
on the perimeter of  
the innercircle for  
crystals.



**Figure 4-25.**  
This door leads  
back to the outer  
ring and allows you  
to reach an other-  
wise inaccessible  
magic ring.

Now, however, you can use it to mount a running jump onto another previously inaccessible platform just to the west. Once you land, the platform will descend, revealing a hideaway in the north wall. Get the Breath of Life ring (which offers protection against death) and the Major Heal potion, and then head west to the teleporter to resume your exploration of the inner circle.



Speaking of teleports, the one just northeast of the chamber where you found the door doesn't work (Figure 4-26). Once activated, it will be your path out of here, so remember the location. Continue on to the room to the southeast and collect the red and blue crystals (Figure 4-27). In a room further southeast, you'll find a Healing potion and another interesting bookshelf where you'll find the first mention of the shield generators across the pass at the Radiant Citadel. In yet another room to the south, beyond the second beacon, pick up the blue crystal.

**Figure 4-26.**

Teleport out of service. To activate, kill chief monster.  
—The Management



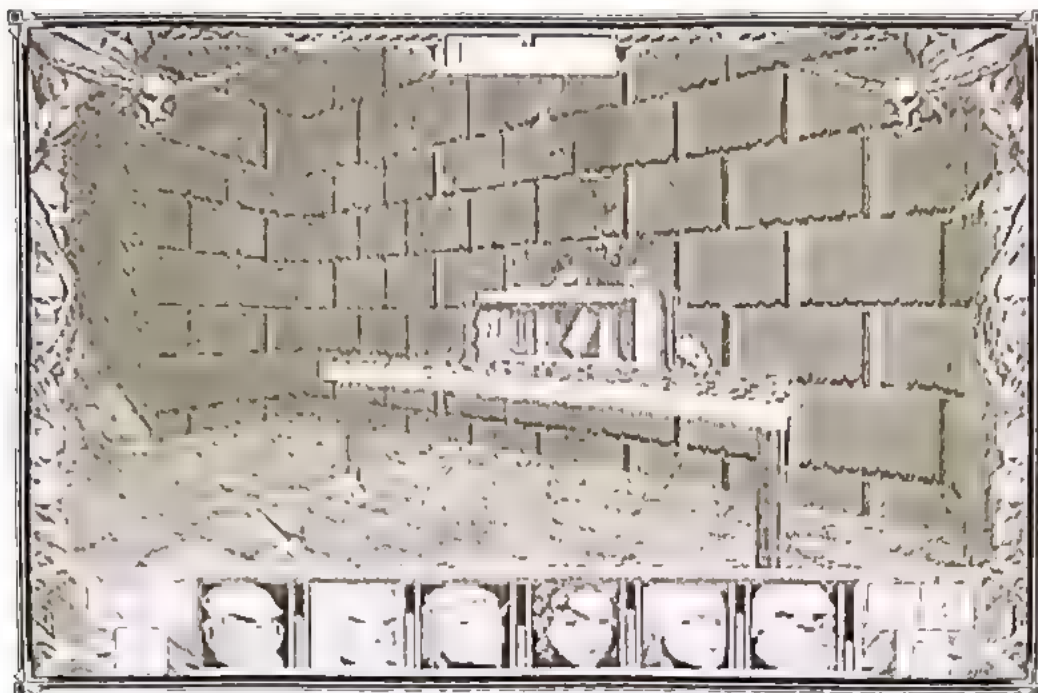
This is almost too easy. Where did all the monsters go? I'll bet the Dark One is really a Giant Beel

Well, don't get cocky, because you're in for a bit of a challenge. The room to the southwest appears empty. Ah, not quite! See anything odd in the southwest corner? Check it out, and you'll find a hidden cupboard containing a yellow crystal and a book, *The Physical Adept* (Figure 4-28). This tome increases a character's Martial Arts and Acrobatics skills by 25 points.

Finally, head west to complete the circuit of the level. Kill the three Smoke Demons in the next room, get the Strength potion and ... say, the southwest corner of this room looks a little weird, too. Do you suppose ... ? Yes, I suppose: Click on the wall to find a green crystal and another book, *Theurgic Principles*. (Using this one improves a character's Cast Spells skill by 50 points.)

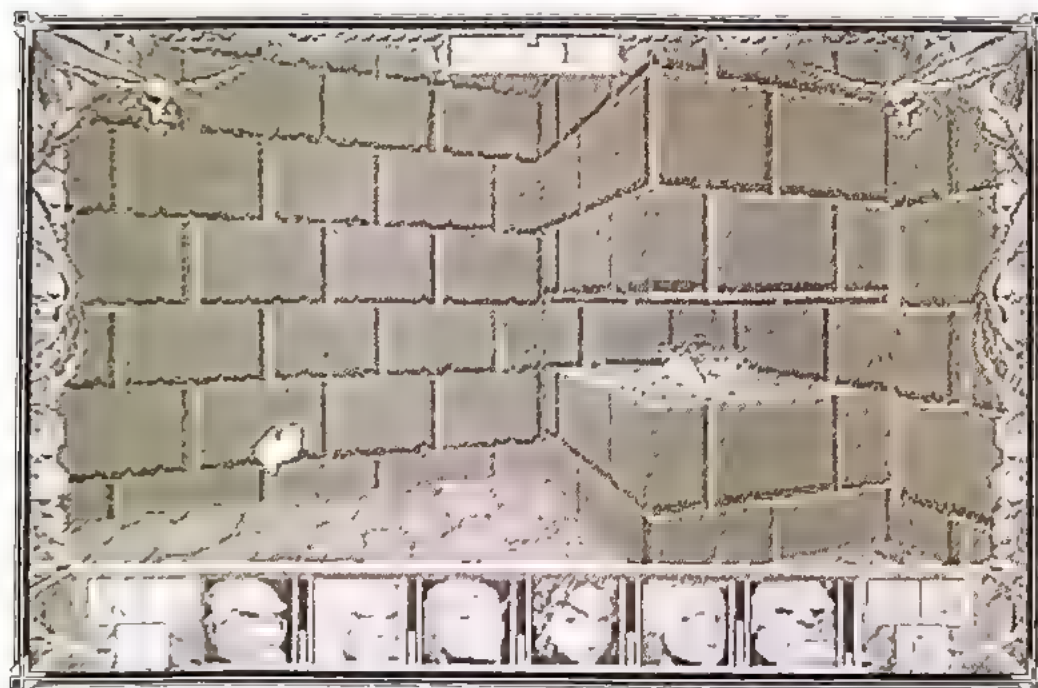






**Figure 4-27.**

In my crystal I  
see ... you ...  
spending hundreds  
of hours playing  
Thunderscape!



**Figure 4-28.**

The corner of this  
seemingly empty  
room conceals one  
of the crystals you'll  
need.

Now you're ready to follow Selene's tip and explore the center of the level. Start by getting the Beacon Altar's Key. This can be found just east and north of where you entered the level, to the right of a large, locked door.





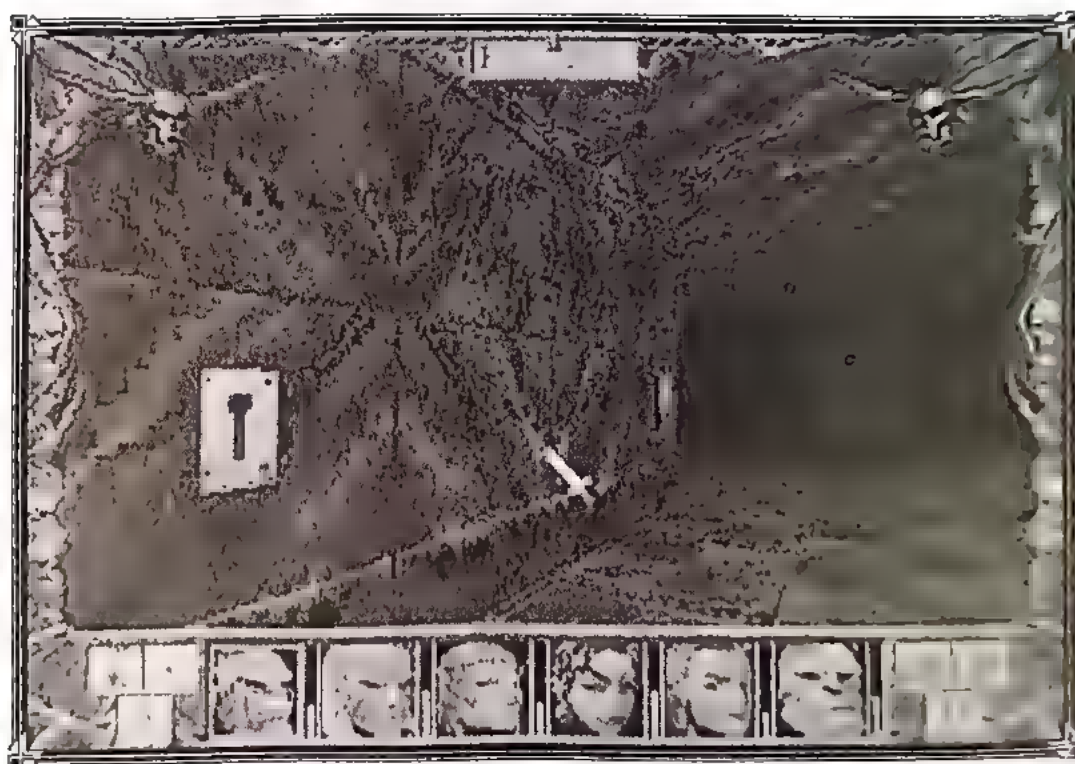
The key doesn't work here, but be sure to read the inscriptions to the sides of the door. One to the east reads: "Secrets unlocked to a Radiant few who follow the path of the sun. Return when the daystar is up on the dawn side of winter." The one to the west changes the last line to: "Return when the daystar is down on the night side of south."

Yeah, right! There's no reason you should know what this means right now. Tool around to the northern side of this central zone and see if you have better luck with the key there.

You've probably been hearing the moaning of Wraiths for most of this level and wondering where it was coming from. Look no further: A pair of barred gates blocks access to two altar rooms with three Wraiths in each. Unlock the lock on the opposite wall (Figure 4-29) and throw the lever beside it, and both gates will open.

**Figure 4-29.**

Man, that is some big keyhole.



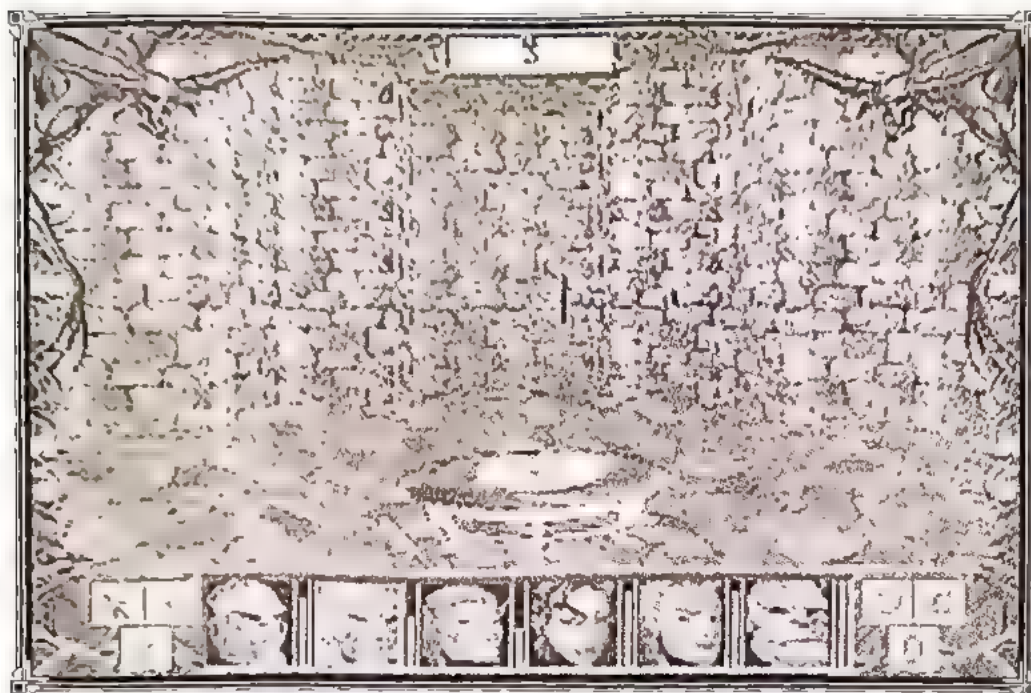
Enter the right-hand gate. Kill the Wraiths inside, get the Crusader's Ring (which adds one point to the user's strength) and read the plaque on the rear wall:

*With the tint of rouge in the dawn sky, the blush of life began.  
Beneath the gentle hued rays of the sun, life's joy fulfilled.  
In the soothing shade of a twilight sky, life's final hours spent.*





Hey, it doesn't even rhyme! Still, the meaning should come through. Each line evokes a color—rouge for red, sun for yellow and twilight for blue. You have crystals in those colors, right! Maybe they'd work with the altar behind you, which seems to be in disarray. Type in the colors in just that order, and the crystals will begin to glow (Figure 4-30).



**Figure 4-30.**

Once you correct the alignment of the crystals, they begin to glow.

Now, repeat this process in the left-hand altar room. The only difference is that the references on the plaque are to red, green and blue, so use those crystals in that order. Get the Magical Barrier scroll while you're there.

It's time for the Dark One to see the light. Make your way back to the two sets of double doors where you found the altar key. Kill the Smoke Demons who have gathered to oppose you. The northern doors are still locked, but the southern ones open at a touch. Take the Wand of Magic on the floor—it restores all of a character's mana—and have a look at the levers on the east and west walls (Figure 4-31).

These levers are the keys to the double doors to the north. Each can be set in either an up or down position. You could work this out by trial and error—there are only four possible combinations—but you've already received a clue. Think back to that "daystar" business in the inscriptions beside the northern doors, the east passage mentioned "up" and the west one mentioned "down."

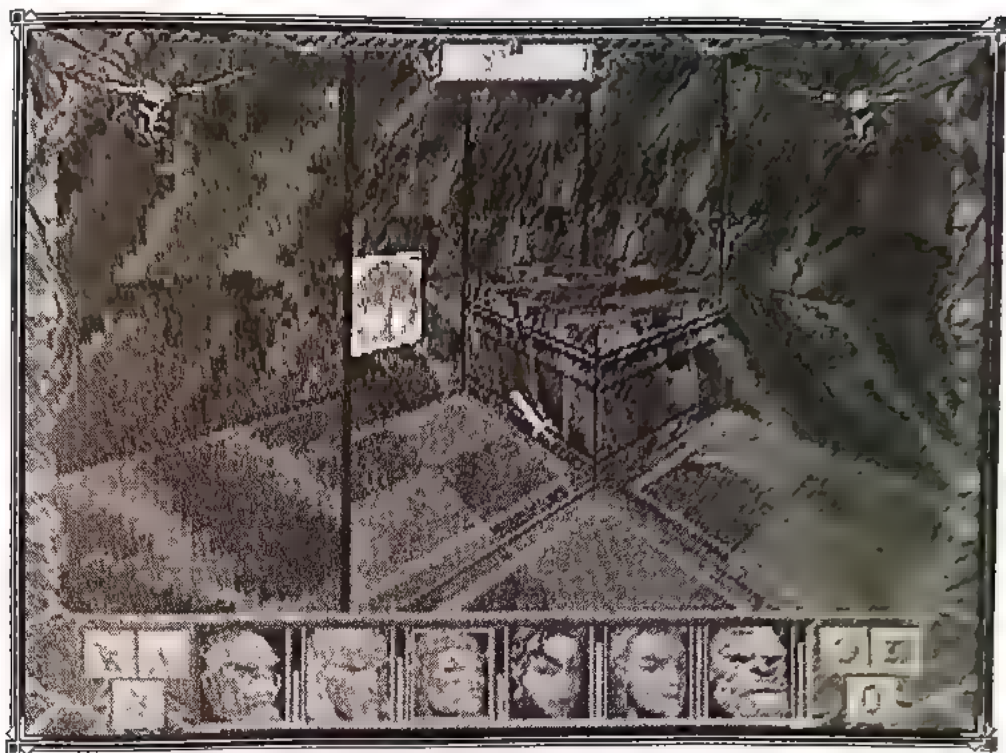






**Figure 4-31.**

Um, I think we  
just wandered into  
the ladies room ...



Move the west lever down and the east lever up, and then head north and open the double doors. Save your game, step into the elevator, and push the button. (Be sure you're in before you hit the button; it's possible to make the elevator descend without you in it.)

The battle isn't all that tough (Figure 4-32). The Dark One has 1,000 hit points, the ability to strike multiple times in a round, and a repertoire of unpleasant spells (of which Whirlwind is especially nasty). But a successful first-round strike, heavy on spells, can cut his total to half that, and a steady flurry of weapon hits and incantations from the party seems to unnerve him. When he goes, he'll disappear into a bluish miasma, and you'll be left to claim your prizes.

The prizes, I'm happy to report, are considerable! Take the two white crystals, the Demon Slayer (a devilish pole-arm weapon), and the chests (which contain a rather chintzy 5,000 C/P). Have a look at the bizarre decor, and ride the elevator back up. This place really is just too weird.

You have only one more thing to do here: Exchange the white crystals for the corrupt dark ones atop the two beacons. You get to keep the dark ones, so take them and don't let their evil history scare you off. One, called Talon of the Anarch, casts the powerful Maelstrom spell. (And it's unlikely that you have characters qualified to cast it on their own at this point in the game.) The other, Tear of the Beast, casts the more mundane Charm spell.





**Figure 4-32.**  
The Dark One buys  
the farm.

Selene will leave the party as you descend the pyramid after replacing the second crystal. She's staying to maintain the beacons. (Guess she's got to beat the party back to Skelon's Gorge and reestablish her secret life as Fineal!)

And now you're done here. You can use the teleporter to return to Skelon's Gorge at any time or continue exploring the lower levels of the keep. However, if you think you'll want to return to the keep later, it would be better to walk back to the Gorge via the Troll Caves. If you use the teleporter, which is one-way only, you'll strand Droog's elevator at the top of the shaft and make it impossible to return.

The glowing teleporter is located in the center of the northern edge of the inner circle. You'll materialize in a hitherto unvisited cave on the second level of the Gorge's northern bluffs. The canyon is empty and silent. You're out of danger, for the moment, and the world of Aden is halfway there.





## *In the Bowels of the Mountain*

*The party kicks back and takes a little break, revels in its surroundings, cleans out the Ogre Caves, blows up a boiler, and makes a friend. (Literally!)*

### *Return to Skelon's Gorge*

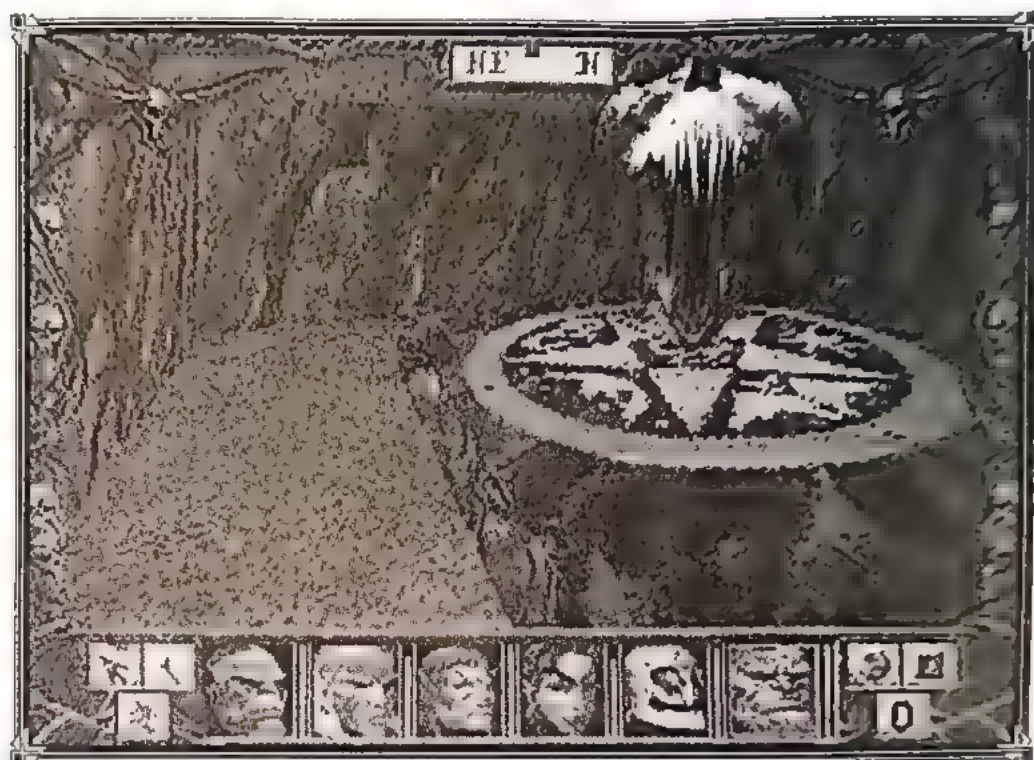
Consider this next little section of *Thunderscape* something of a vacation after the chamber of horrors that was Vanguard Keep. No serious monsters to kill. No complex puzzles to solve. Just a bankroll to build, a ton of found weaponry to unload, and some oddities and curiosities to examine at your leisure.





The first such oddity surfaces almost as soon as the party rematerializes on the teleporter platform in Skelon's Gorge. Have a look at the east and west sides of the base of the teleporter platform (Figure 5-1). Right! It doesn't have any, and, as a result, you can see cave walls descending into the blackness beneath it.

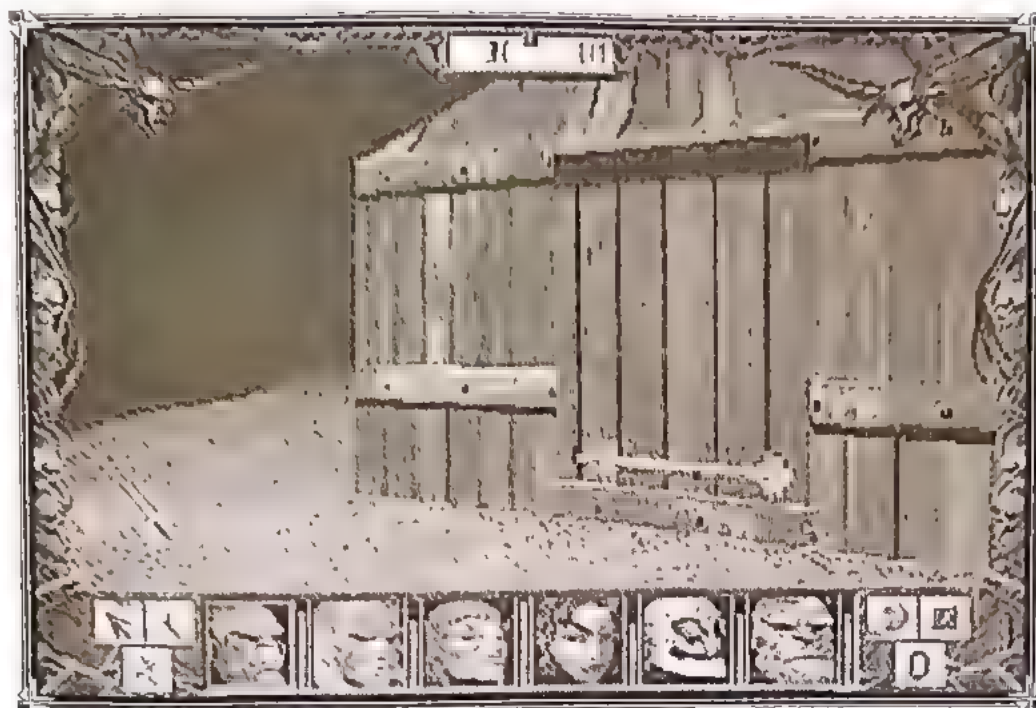
**Figure 5-1.**  
A little graphical  
oddity in the tele-  
porter chamber



Not to worry; this isn't something you have to explore. It appears to be simply a tantalizing omission of wall textures. But it may install in your thinking the notion that Skelon's Gorge may have unplumbed depths. And sure enough, it does.

### *Things to Do Today*

But first thing's first. Make your way down the bluffs and over the bridge to Finea's shop. She apparently has heard of your deeds—how exactly did that happen if she isn't Selenel!—and greets you with a big grin. (Dig the husky voice she adopts when she says good-bye!)



**Figure 5-2.**

Hey, the prices at Finea's are a little higher than the new mall, but the courtesy is impeccable.

Seriously, though, Finea's shop (Figure 5-2) is your only real stop in the Gorge before you get back to the real business at hand. Here's a checklist of things to do there:

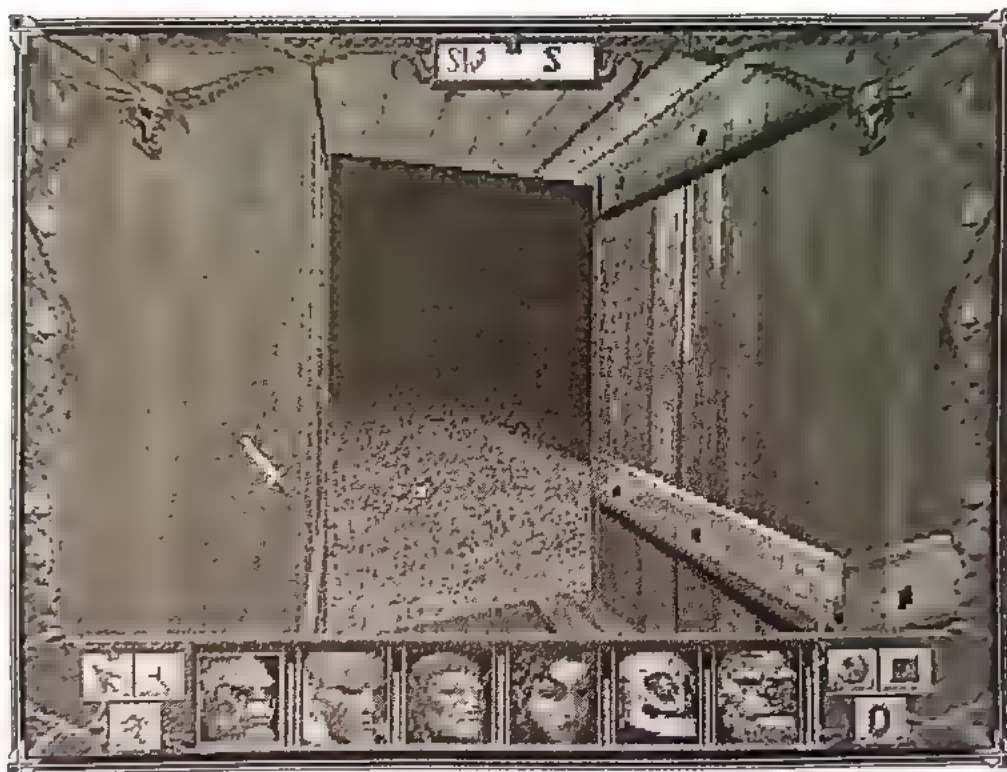
- ◆ Sell off anything you don't need. You should be able to raise 40,000 to 50,000 GP without breaking a sweat. Do keep enough good armor on hand to outfit one character and any extra high-level axes or maces. (That's right: You're going have a new recruit before too long.)
- ◆ Outside the shop, drop any extraneous keys, documents, or other items Finea won't buy. Remember: "Dropped" does not mean "gone forever" in *Thunderscape*. The game keeps track of the items, and, if need be, you can return and retrieve them later. (Keep the Mountain Key, however.)
- ◆ Check out the shop's inventory for new items. If you were diligent about grabbing the big-ticket items in Vanguard Keep, most of them will be obsolete by now. However, a few, like the Magic Claymore and plate pot helm, may still find a happy home in the party.



- ◆ Don't postpone any important business you may have to transact with Finea. Take care of it now. If you visit her more than a couple of times during this stay in the Gorge, or get on with the game and come back later, you'll find the Mountains Cats have made a comeback and that Finea's little shop is just an empty wooden room (Figure 5-3).

**Figure 5-3.**

A view you probably never thought you'd see: Finea's, from the inside looking out.



Don't bother searching the Gorge for clues to her disappearance. There are none. Everything else is as it was. This is a bug, and it means you won't be able to identify, sell, or buy supplies until you reach Gnaw's in Lower Karegh-Konan. Unfortunately, there's no workaround within the game—an Identify spell was initially included in *Thunderscape* and then trimmed—and you'll have to rely purely on stat and skill changes to determine items' properties. However, in this strategy guide, you hold in your hands the ultimate Identify spell. We'll touch on every item of consequence as soon as it's mentioned.





## Back into the Fray: The Ogre Caves

Unfortunately, there's also no Theros around to tell you what comes next. (I wonder what became of him, anyway!) Fortunately, there's only one avenue in the Gorge that we haven't followed up: That first riddle we encountered atop the first bluff on the north side of the river.

Cross the bridge, ride the elevator up to top of the first bluff, bear north to the statue, and then click on it to call up the riddle again.

As noted earlier, if you can't reason it out, the answer turns up a couple of times early in the game—first in Theros' note and then in an inscription on a cave wall in the Gorge.

It's "peace." Just type it in without quotes. A section of wall to the east will rise, revealing a secret canyon containing a pair of doors ... and about a half-dozen mountain cats eager to sharpen their teeth on you.

Forget about the mountain cats. They still haven't learned how to fight. Once they're kitty litter, open the door in the cliff face to the north. Don't bother with the armor here—I'd rather go naked than wear fur armor at this stage of the game—but do note the presence of a mana-restoring pool, and go outdoors again.

The Mountain Key allows you to open the great set of double doors to the northeast. These lead to the Ogre Caves—the first of two regions called, collectively, the Bowels of the Mountain—and, as you'll learn from the sign beside the door, to the Dwarven city of Karegh-Konan. (Hmmm, that's interesting: Something's been scratched off the sign. What could that be!) It's the first step in your descent beneath Skelon's Pass to the Radiant Citadel.

### *This is a Fray?*

Enter through the doors, and almost immediately, you'll get into a fight. Don't worry. You'll win. The difficulty of combat in this large, cleanly laid-out lair is pitched much lower than Vanguard Keep—probably to give players who used the Mountain Key prematurely something to chew on. (Reminder: If you don't have the Mountain Key, it can be found with the remains of the trader's companions in the northern end of the Troll Caves.)

However, by now, the party's members are a bunch of demigods—around Level 13 or 14—and you should be able to blow through here in no time. The only thing you really need to do is reach the exit—located down a wide set of stairs in the caves' northeast corner. With a little luck, that will take you about 5-10 minutes.



If that's all you want to do, just use the north central exit from the foyer, follow the corridor beyond east to the second-to-last exit on the left, and then bear north to the big double doors. Open them with the switch on the wall, and descend the stairs to the next level.

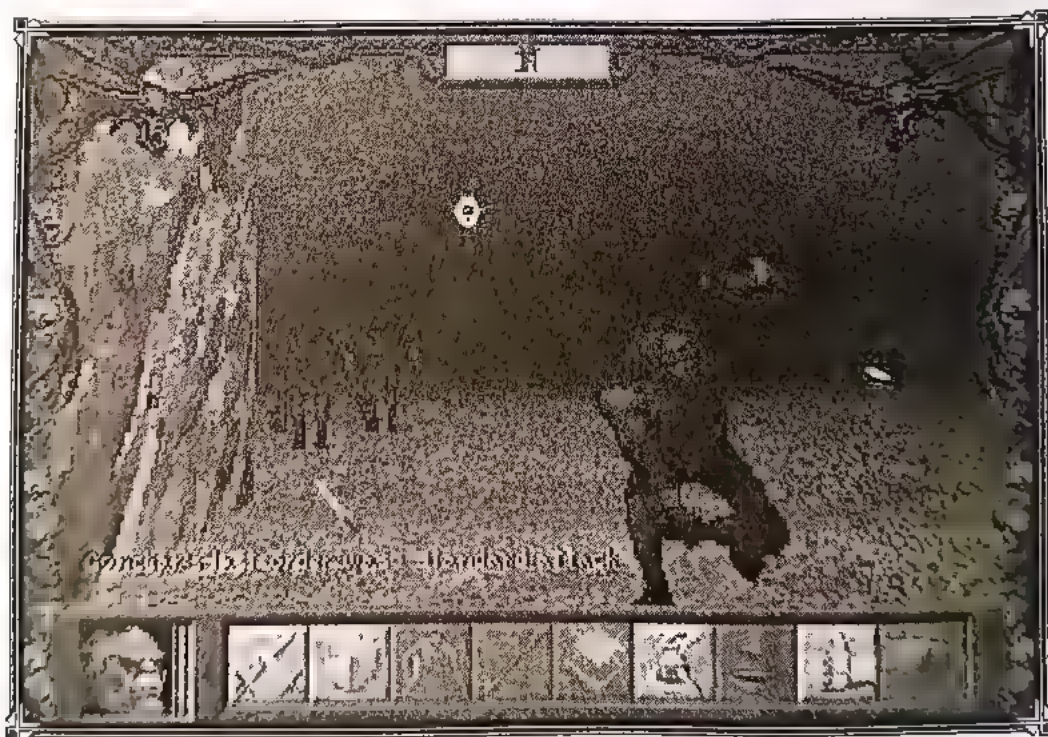


There's nothing wrong with the speedy approach here. The Ogre Caves are a transitional level with no real puzzles or vital clues. However, it's worth lingering here a bit for the range of books, rings, and special items in out-of-the-way spots. Besides, you'll find tons of ogres—beefier versions of the trolls—and this is an effective, risk-free way to build experience for what's to come.

Kill the two ogre sentries and the ogre tribesman who accost you in the foyer (Figure 5-4), and collect the "Ogre Agreement" and "Ogre Background" documents from the side rooms. The Agreement seems designed to explain the ogres' aggression and to let you know that this cave isn't just a side trip, there's something beyond it. The Background suggests that there's a quicker way to get to the ogres' hearts than through their chest wall. They are like trolls, after all, and they love rocks.



**Figure 5-4.**  
An ogre battle



Or do they? You'll find about a half-dozen rocks on this level. Pick them up if you like. You can play with them a bit later in the level, but the ogres won't respond to them (though they will accept bribes to break off combat). This will be explained a bit deeper in the caves.





## Of Scorpions and Secret Doors

The chamber just off the foyer's northwest corner is of special interest. There are secret doors in the south and north walls. Beyond the south door, you'll find a maul, a spear, and potions of Healing and Cure Poison. The door to the north opens into an east-west suite of rooms where you can fight a pair of ogres.

That doesn't excite you? Well, check out the door in this section's northwest corner. It leads into a wood-walled maze that may remind you of Finea's back room. Like the whole northwestern part of the Ogre Caves, it appears abandoned—it has the aspect of a settled section of an old mine—and a new monster has claimed the room for its digs.

You'll have an easy time with the giant scorpion (Figure 5-5). If we were back at the Troll Caves stage, I'd be full of warnings about its poison. But it's a flimsy creature, easily defeated, and the Dispel spell will get the poison out of your system.



**Figure 5-5.**

The giant scorpion's poison is no match for the party's weapons.

Scorpions or no scorpions, do explore this maze. There's some good stuff squirreled away in here—much of it behind secret doors. Start by moving as far east as possible and then bearing north. At what appears to be the end of the hall, you'll find a secret door.





Continue north, through the door, to find a Cure Poison potion, a Poison Dart scroll, a chest containing random weapons and a book, *Waer's Bestiary*, that increases a character's Xenology skill by 50 points (Figure 5-6).

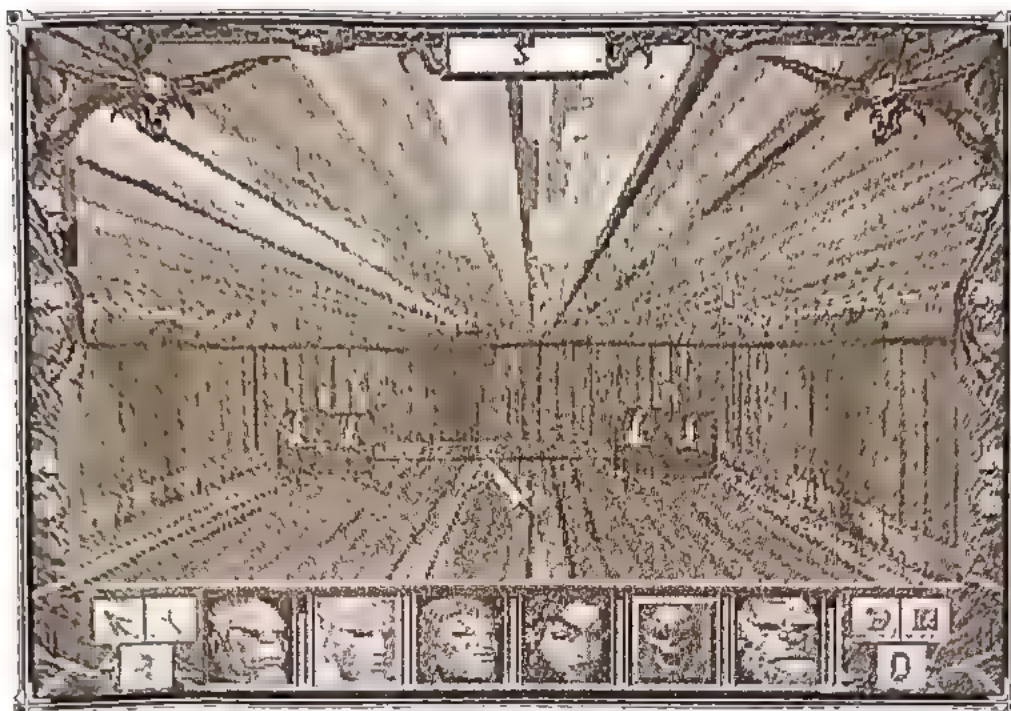
Figure 5-6.  
*Waer's Bestiary*



Now, return south and west to the maze entrance. From here, chart a northward course, staying close to the west wall. You'll pass through a pair of rooms along the way. After the second room, immediately bear east into an east-west corridor and take your first left. Follow this hall north to the end to find three potions of Cure Poison and one of Healing, a Mana Bolt scroll, and a Ring of Reflexes (which increases the user's initiative). (If you get lost, the coordinates for the ring are 9,1,400.)

Return to the east-west corridor and look for a secret door on the south wall just to the east. Inside, you'll find a Magical Broad Sword, an Armor potion and a chest containing potions and 500 C/P (Figure 5-7).

Worth a few scorpion stings, eh? Finally, return to the east-west corridor and continue east. You'll wind up in a large chamber with three miner's shacks and a ceiling so high you can barely pick it out. The shacks have likewise been abandoned, but the southernmost holds a Cure Poison potion and a chest containing 175 C/P.



**Figure 5-7.** Many of the items in the maze, located in the Ogre Caves' northwest corner, are hidden behind secret doors.

## The Way Down and What You'll Find There

Further east, you'll find yourself on the north side of a big, switch-operated door. To the north lie the stairs down to the next level. Our path lies south of here, but before we take it, stick your head into the rooms east of the door. You'll probably attract the attention of a Silver Steam Golem.

You'll be heartily sick of golems by the end of the next level. They're basically steam-powered robots and they come in three varieties: silver, copper, and steel. Only the steel ones are worthy adversaries at this stage, with 240 hit points, but they're all vulnerable to electricity. The Lightning Bolt spell, that old stand-by from Vanguard Keep, will work wonders with them in combat.

Destroy the golem and get the Kama knife you'll find here. Return to the door and throw the switch. It'll unlock the door and set off an alarm that summons ogre sentries. March south and kill them, and begin a systematic reconnaissance of the rooms on either side of this north-south hallway. (You can avoid setting off the alarm only by backtracking to the foyer and using the main east-west corridor to reach the areas south of the doors.)



## Cleaning Up

The first opening on the left leads into a large suite of rooms. Kill the ogres here—as many as eight—and look behind the earthwork in the westernmost room for another malevolent-looking pole-arm weapon—a magical Bardiche. (Y'know, between the Blood Staff, the Reaper, and the Demon Slayer, Fylo's building up a really nasty inventory!)

Continue south down the main hallway. The next room to the right is the well room referred to in the Background document. Frivlar's Ring, which adds one point to the user's Health, can be found on the well rim.

You can also jump into the well, wet the rocks you've found, as per the Background document, and get a sort of funny response. It's all immaterial, however. Read the document "Ogres Turn Evil," which can be found on the floor nearby. Something wicked this way has come, and the ogres apparently have lost their taste for these treats.

In the room across the hall, you can pry 500 G.P. in gems from the northern wall. And a short way to the south is the main east-west hallway. A number of rooms—some with distinctive qualities—can be found off this corridor, but the only chamber of real interest is a southern one containing a fire pit. Boy, the ogres leave their rings in some precarious places! Check the pit's rim for Kelvin's Ring, which offers protection against fire.

(That's a little game-designer joke, by the way; Lord Kelvin, a British physicist, developed a scale to measure absolute temperature.)

We're done. If you have the urge, explore the cave's southeast corner. You'll find a number of items (all minor, save for a musket), more gems ... and so many ogres that it's probably not worth your while. Make your way back to the stairs, and descend. Your vacation is over.

## Golems, My Preciousssss

What is this place? Steam pipes line orange rock walls. You occasionally hear a hissing. And if you step north and open the first door to the east (and trash the copper steam golem inside), you'll find mine carts and tracks leading off to other rooms. It's as though you've wandered into some sort of factory.



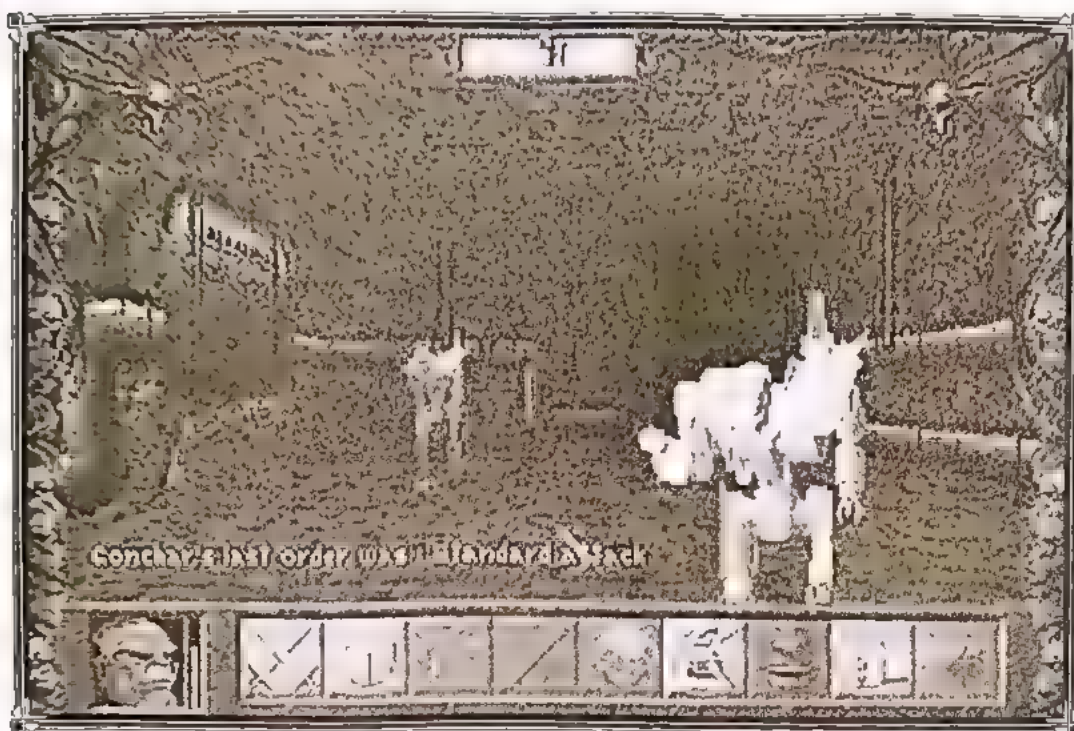




That's precisely what this is: a steam golem factory, and, potentially, a dangerous place. You'll need to figure out how it works—and then sabotage it—in order to reach the Dwarven Mines beyond.

Unfortunately, you have precious little information to go on. Fortunately, some notes and spare parts have been left behind that will help you out.

Fight off the two Silver Steam Golems that attack you when you enter (Figure 5-8), get the Kukri knife from the corner and head north. Take your first left, and open the double doors to the north. Here you'll find a boiler that looks like a giant dog (check out the lump of coal next to it) and a document called "Automated Defense I."



**Figure 5-8.**  
Silver Steam  
Golems in action

I don't like the sound of that, do you? It's an authorization from a Lord Enabru for the chief engineer to activate the factory's automated defense mode if the level can no longer be defended. (Against you, presumably!) But what precisely does "automated defense" mean?

Let's see if we can find out. Leave by the northwest exit, and, in the next room, use the hall to the southwest. This puts you back in the east-west hall opposite a room reached by two sets of double doors.



Do not open these doors unless you're prepared for a fight. (You'll understand why in a little while.) Take a step to the west, and turn right up the narrow corridor you'll find here. In the room at the end, you'll find the document "Automated Defense II," which lays out the details of the factory's robotic defenses: the closing-off of the research area behind steam-operated security doors, rapid-fire production of steam golems, and activation of stored steam golems.

In other words, if you opened those double doors, you'd be opening the door to steam golem city. A trio of golems emerges every time you open the door—first silver, then copper, then steel, and then the pattern repeats ad infinitum. You can't get in, and, if you could, you wouldn't find anything. However, if you've been racing through the game and are looking for a place to build experience in a hurry, it's a perfect, measured method for character building.

Are you getting any ideas? You should be. Shut down the boiler and the security doors can be opened. (This also locks down this golem storage area, so you won't be able to stumble in by mistake.)

## **Boiling Mad**

A way to cool off the boiler is close at hand. Head south back down the narrow corridor, cross the east-west hall, and continue following the corridor until you reach the room at the end. Here you'll find a device called SOVC (safety-override valve clamp) and Boiler Instructions that reveal if all three SOVCs are used, the boiler will go boom. You just need to find two more SOVCs.

Hey, funny coincidence: The whole west side of the factory is a maze devoted to concealing—among other things—two more SOVCs!

Head back to the east-west passage and follow it west until you can't go straight anymore. Follow it south and west, then north at first opportunity, and then, in short order, west, south and west again. Jump over the pipe, and turn north and west, and follow this passage into a room at map coordinates 2,51,352. And viola! There's SOVC No. 2.

Retrace your steps, and, when you have a chance, turn west and keep heading that way until you reach the western edge of the factory. Head north, jump over the pipe, and make your first right. (You may get boxed in by silver steam golems in this corridor. It's a good spot for a Lightning Bolt spell, don't you think!)







This passage will dip south and then turn straight east. At this point, you'll find several corridors leading off to the north. Take the first and open the secret door at the end. The chest in this hidden room (4,25,352) contains 1,000 GP and you'll also find a Cure Poison potion and Lightning Bolt and Magical Barrier scrolls.

The second corridor has two branches. The east one leads directly to a chest containing 500 GP. The west one, very long and convoluted, leads first to a potion cache, a Ring of Protection and the first skeleton we've seen in a while (4,5,352), and then to a book called *Powder and Shot* that increases a character's Firearms skill by 50 points (11, 29, 352).

The third takes you to the final SOVC (at 9, 21, 352).

### Oh, and While You're There . . .

You're ready to blow the boiler, but since you're already out here in the sticks, grab another valuable item or two. Make your way back to the corridor that forms the western edge of the factory and follow it north and then east. Look for a Crusader's Ring on top of the second pipe that blocks your path east.

In the southern part of the maze, you'll find a pair of large chambers with double doors (16,49,352). They are well-guarded by golems—silver in the access corridors, copper in the outer chamber, and steel in the inner—but the reward is substantial. In the inner chamber, you'll find a Magical War Hammer (Figure 5-9).



**Figure 5-9.**

A Magical War Hammer can be found in a well-defended chamber in the southern part of the golem-factory maze.





**Note:** As good a weapon as this might be, you'll notice that this—and all the axe/mace weapons we've seen so far—still can't compete with BERT'S CLUB in the doing-damage department.

Once you've wrapped things up, return to the perimeter corridor and head south and east. You'll wind up in the factory's foyer again. Head north up the passage, turn left, enter the first doors on your right, exit via the double doors to the northwest, and exit this chamber by the double doors to the north. You'll find yourself facing the locked security doors.

## Pop Goes the Boiler

Yikes! You've seen these "Kilroy" doors before (Figure 5-10). (King Droog and Lord Enabru must have the same contractor or something.)

**Figure 5-10.**

Look familiar? Droog the troll king had a door just like this one.

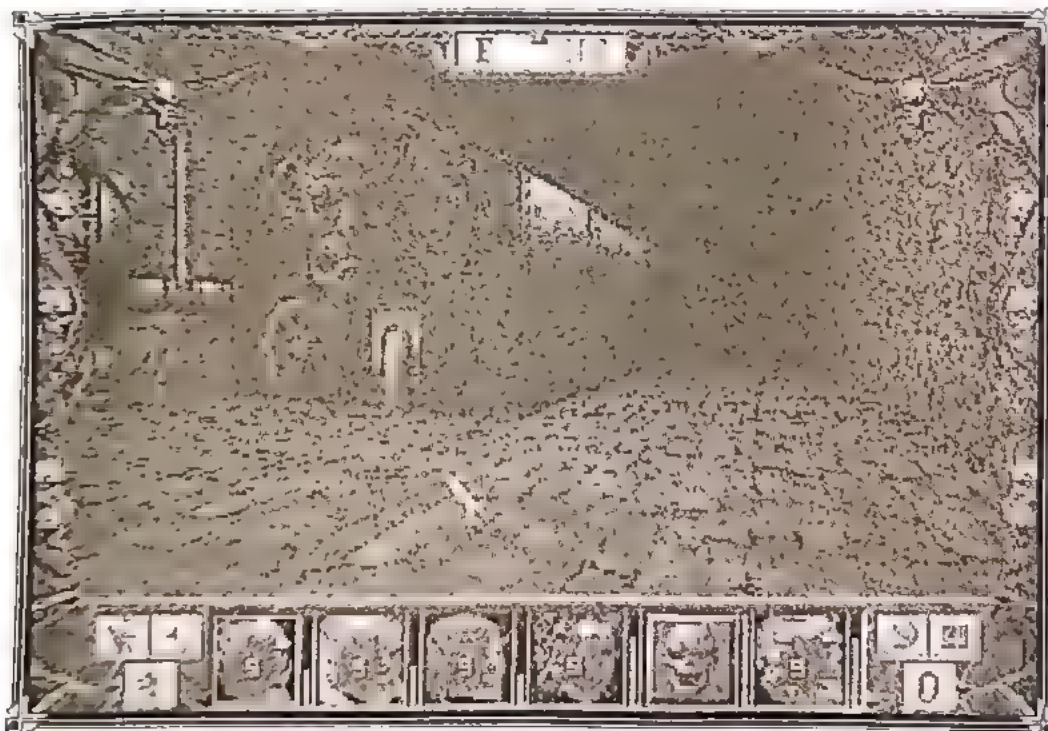


The boiler room is just down the hall to the east. Man, that boiler's about the size of a locomotive! Your task here is pretty straight-forward: Click the SOVCs on any part of the boiler and run like the dickens.



But look out: The game plays a nasty little trick on you that can have disastrous consequences if you're not wise to it. See, two of the SOVCs, not just one, will be applied to the boiler when you connect the first clamp. The only way to figure this out is if you click on the boiler for a description after placing that first clamp. If the three SOVCs aren't lined up together in one character's inventory, you might not realize what's happened until the boiler blows up in your face. In other words, once you connect a second SOVC, make like you hear the ice cream truck and run for it!

***Note:** Results may vary from game to game here. Some players report that they've been able to blow the boiler with just two SOVCs. And they're not just mistakenly thinking that they've used two (as described above). They had one SOVC left over afterward.*



**Figure 5-11.**

If the party's too close when the boiler blows, each member will take damage. Here, it got off lucky.

The explosion has a significant blast radius (Figure 5-11). You should be safe from damage if you run out the door and then straight west to the bend in the corridor, where you can still watch the fun.

Wham.

Yup, that did it. The boiler's full of holes and the security doors to the north can be opened now.





## The Squeaky Party Member Gets the Grease

Head north and pick the lock on the first of the two sets of double doors you'll find on the left. Kill the two copper steam golems inside, get the Steam Thrower (Figure 5-12) from the corner, and return to the hall.

**Figure 5-12.**  
A Steam Thrower



Now pick the lock on the right-hand door. This leads to a corridor with what appear to be cells (also locked) to the north and south. Take out the steel steam golem guard at the west end of the hall, and see what you find behind the nine doors.

You should come up with an Armor potion; a range of random armor and shield items; a total of 450 GP; a giant sword called Avenger; and a partly assembled golem missing an exhaust pipe.

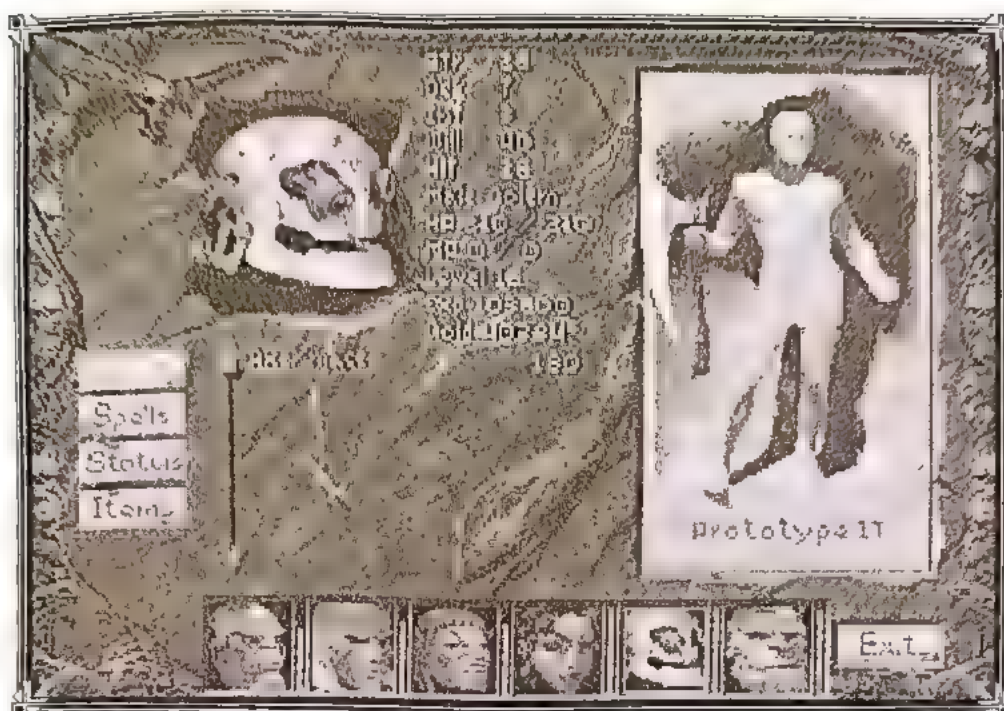
You'll want to find that pipe. A completed golem will fill the No. 5 slot in the party—empty since Selene checked out in the Vanguard Keep Towers—and you could use a full slate for the approaching battles.

After the complicated business of the scattered SOVCs and the boiler, this solution is utterly simple. Just follow the corridor across the hall to the room at its end. The exhaust pipe is on the floor. Have a look at the golem-making machinery if you like, but don't touch the fire pit.





Return to the cell with the golem parts, click on them, and you'll be given a chance to assemble the golem. The golem's name is Prototype 17 (Figure 5-13), and it looks more like a Terminator in skeletal form. (Hey, fine, as long as it's on your side!) Proto carries a Great Axe, which he swings with an Axe/mace skill of 180, and has an inhuman Will stat of 40. (After all, he's a machine.) He's also naked as a jaybird, so put that spare suit of armor to good use.



**Figure 5-13.**  
Prototype 17 plays  
a mean axe.

## This Way Out

Open the door to the north and kill the golems you find wandering here. Do not open the double doors down that dark corridor to the east. This appears to be another golem production or storage facility like the one near the factory entrance. It's still functioning, despite the destruction of the boiler, and you don't need that kind of trouble with the exit so close.

Instead, jump over the pipe to the west and finish off any golems you find there. You'll see four doors. Skip the one to the south, it's essentially a trap. You have to fight a bazillion silver steam golems in there and only get a Major Heal potion as your thanks.





However, the room to the west is empty of critters and contains a Hand Cannon and a Mana Bolt scroll. The left-hand door of the two to the north leads into a room with a single golem, a pair of potions, and a couple of curiosities.

One is the steam pipe that divides the room. It's the longest stretch of unsupported pipe in the factory. The other, in the northeast corner, is what appears to be a tiny powder keg. You can't do anything with this keg, but you will be using others before too long. (There's lots of foreshadowing in *Thunderscape*.)

### *The Proving Grounds of the Mad Golem Lord*

Of course, these are dead-ends. Your path lies beyond the right-hand door of the two northern doors. This opens into a vast chamber that appears to be used as a golem proving ground. There's the sound of gunfire in the distance, and eight golems of all three varieties are running around.

You'll probably have to fight at least a few of them as you make your way to the exit in the southeast corner. Kill the Steel Steam Golem beyond the door, and you're basically home free. Bear east (the room to the west is empty) into a blocked-off section of the perimeter corridors and head south. You'll find a musket, a Mana potion, and, at the end of the hall, a wooden-framed doorway. Click on it, and head east into the Dwarven Mines.





## **1 Me Mine: The Dwarven Mines**

*The party tests its metal, throws levers until it is blue in the face, discovers that everything isn't necessarily on the level, makes a rescue and enlists a new recruit, and reaches the gates of Karegh-Konan.*

The three levels of the Dwarven Mines—West, Old and East—are not one of *Thunderscape's* more stimulating environments. The mines are cramped, dark, largely puzzle-free once you negotiate a rigorous entrance exam, and empty of all but workaday monsters. (With one notable exception!) Much of your job here is simply picking up new weapons and supplies to reequip the party or sell in the Dwarven city to which the mines lead.





To keep things hopping, I've placed a special emphasis here on interesting side paths and oddities you may stumble across on the rockbound road to Karegh-Konan.

## *The West Mines*

This starts out as a very different sort of level. The initial sections of the West Mines are essentially a big puzzle, with little in the way of fighting and, initially, a great deal of running around and throwing switches.

You'll start out in the northwest corner of the level in an area with a number of gates (all locked), passages (usually equipped with a booby trap), and signs on the walls (often seemingly contradictory).

You'll need some introduction to get started, and, naturally, a relevant document is nearby. You've already found Frivlar's Ring in the Ogre Caves—I guess we don't have guess what the Ogres are eating in lieu of rocks—so you may as well take the note intended for him as well. (Pick up the Cure Poison potion next to it as well.)

Read the document. Now, please. It's important. Basically, this is a crib note for the visiting Frivlar from his host (Warhammer) that is designed to smooth the guest's path through the puzzles that block entry into the mine.

Postpone a visit to the left-hand passage marked "emergency supplies"—this corridor is booby trapped—and enter the right-hand corridor and exit the next room to the northeast.

## *Testing Your Metal*

The metal puzzle starts to the south. You'll face three sequential sets of three corridors. In each case, read the signs and use only the corridor with the sign that is correct. I hope you remember your Periodic Table of the Elements from high school chemistry.

*Note: The specifics of the following example may not be the same in your game, so take it as a general illustration rather than as a note-for-note rendition.*



For the purposes of our illustration, the first three signs are:

*Quicksilver is heavier than either copper or gold.*

*Gold is heavier than either copper or quicksilver.*

*Copper is heavier than either gold or quicksilver.*

Let's see. Gold is heavy, but you'll recall from Warhammer's note to Frivlar that "quicksilver" is mercury, which is heavy indeed and wouldn't be called by an alternate name except to conceal the right answer. So you would enter the "quicksilver" corridor.

<Pause>

Good. No blocks of stone on your little pointed head. No spears through the ears. We're doing well. The second set of corridors has the following signs:

*Brass is more malleable than either copper or tin.*

*Copper is more malleable than either tin or brass.*

*Tin is more malleable than copper or brass.*

Hmmm. That's a close one, as brass and tin are both malleable. But tin is the right answer.

The signs for the third set of corridors read:

*Iron makes better weapons than either copper or silver.*

*Silver makes better weapons than either copper or iron.*

*Copper makes better weapons than either silver or iron.*

Well, that's easy. Take the "iron" passage. Pick up the Merchant's Handbook (which improves a character's Fast Talk and Merchant skills by 25 points each) and throw the switch on the west wall. This closes off the wrong-answer corridors for the last riddle with impassable gates, and opens a gate just east of the final set of passages in the metals puzzle.

This, in turn, leads to another puzzle that opens up the next section of the level. We'll move to that in a moment.



## Oh, Chute

What happens if you do not choose your corridors wisely? Ulp! Let's just say you're in for a sample of what's known in the airline industry as "rapid descent." The lowest level in the West Mines is a long way down (Figure 6-1), and it's quite possible to kill off the whole party with a hard landing.

**Figure 6-1.**

An automap illustration of the descent you'll make via the East Mine chutes



However, it's important to realize that these "wrong choices" aren't pits. They are chutes, and the party can slow its descent and minimize or eliminate damage by attempting to move opposite the direction of the slide.

If you're curious, save your game and take some time to explore how chutes connect. Step into a chute backward for a more vivid sense of what you're going through on the way down.

A number have landings (inescapable) to break your fall. But, whichever one you take, you'll eventually wind up in the northwest corner of a room with four levers on the walls. Throw all four switches to create an exit in the northeast corner.

Oh, no, that sound! The large chamber you've created is home to eight Mantis Warriors, whom we haven't seen since the Troll Caves and who comprise about three-quarters of this level's small monster population.







Kill them, take the Acid Arrow and Fireball scrolls and the Healing and Mana potions and follow the passage in the northwest corner to its end. The elevator here will automatically lift you back to the puzzle level. Throw the switch on the south wall to open a passage to the west.

Now, there's one more interesting property of these chutes to know about. They stay open once you've used them, and the openings back up on the puzzle level can be hopped over. In other words, you can deliberately activate the chute in the passage that leads to the "emergency supplies," come back up to the puzzle level again, hop over the hole, and grab the goodies—regardless of what Frivlar's Note says about not taking them.

The goodies, in this case, consist of a War Hammer, a medium shield, and a chest containing 225 G/P and random armor and equipment. Nothing to break your neck for, if inventory space is at premium. (If it isn't now, it will be soon.) But what the dwarves won't know, they won't hold against you, so don't worry about it!

## Leverage

With that cleaned up, you can move on to the passage you opened after completing the metals puzzle.

Boy, what a rat's nest. At the end of the corridor, you'll find two rooms and numerous linking passages containing five gates and two doors (all locked), and a lot of switches. Only four of the switches, in rooms to the north and south, are immediately accessible, and only three seem to be working.

Maybe we just throw up our hands and apply for jobs as golems, eh? Have we known Prototype 17 long enough for him to write us a recommendation? (Oh, that's right. He doesn't have the Writing skill. We'll have to struggle on.)

The idea here is to open the central gate—which opens up the rest of the level—by throwing switches in the correct order. It's tricky, but can be sorted out by trial and error. (Hit a switch and see what it does.)

However, here's the quick route:

- 1) In the southern switch room, throw the left-hand switch.
- 2) In the northern switch room, throw the left-hand switch.
- 3) Head back to the south, and go straight south to the switch in the gated alcove, which is now open. Throw this switch.



- 4) Turn around, head north and throw the switch immediately ahead of you.
- 5) Head straight south into the alcove again, and throw this switch a second time.
- 6) Head back to the northern switch room and open the door. Aha! Another switch. Punch this one as well.
- 7) This unlocks the second door just to the east. Open this second door and push the switch inside.
- 8) Head south again. Right at the spot where you'd normally turn west to reach the southern switch room, turn east into the gated area, which is now open, and throw the switch.
- 9) Finally, find the switch in the same position as the one in Step 8, but located to the north of the central gate. Throw it. The central gate is now open.

Done and done! Save your game and break out a cold one.

Or, go find *Thunderscape's* equivalent of a cold one. Head north and then west to find Herbal Remedy, which you've previously only been able to stare at mournfully through a locked gate. (The gate, as it turns out, works like the electric-eye door at the supermarket. However, it's the "out" door and will lock behind you, so don't use it unless you're not coming back this way.) Pry 800 G/P worth of gold from the northern wall.

Then, pop into the pillared room to the south and grab the document, "Dwarven Hwy Desc." It reports the collapse of a section of a passage bypassing the mines and giving easy access to Karegh-Konan. The cave-in is just to the east down the corridor. In other words, you're going to have to go through the mines to get to that Dwarven city.

This is getting kind of interesting, isn't it? And yet, there's relatively little left to do here before you move on to the Old Mines. You'll find some evidence of fighting—lots of blood on the floor—but so far, you can only guess what happened.

As usual, the explanation is close enough to taste. Get back to that nine-switch gate and head south. You'll soon come upon a meeting room. This appears to be the administrative heart of the West Mine. In the



chamber just to the northeast, you'll find the document, "Collapsing Entrances." It reveals that the cave-ins are deliberate—an attempt to prevent an invading army of Nocturnals from reaching Karegh-Konan. The Dwarves have just enough blasting powder to bring it off, but there is no report of their success.

You can only hope they weren't too successful, for you need to reach the city as well. However, a more immediate concern should be finding the exit from this level.



### *The Mine Offices*

Before you set off, explore the rest of this little complex. The chamber northwest of the meeting room has a secret door in its northwest corner. Within, you'll find a hand gun, a war hammer, and a chest.

Return to the meeting room, take the southern passage to another chamber, and check out the room to the northeast for another document. (This document, "Old Mine Mission," suggests you can expect more collapsed tunnels on the next level. The northwest chamber holds the best firearm we've seen so far—a Magical Musket. And the one to the south contains a Haste potion.

### *The Path to the Exit*

OK, let's go find that exit. Bear north and then west at the first junction. You'll soon pick up some mine-car tracks heading west and south. Follow the westbound tracks as far as they can go. They end at a locked gate right next to the spot where you entered the mine. Backtrack a step or two and move south at your first opportunity.

Almost immediately, you should spot a hidden room to the west. Get the Tower Shield within, and continue south. When you reach an open area, look for gold (2,000 GP worth) in a corner to the east. Continue south until the passage turns east, and look for a door to the southeast.

Well, that's almost as good as an exit. The door in question leads to a warren that leads to the exit. But where's the key? Right nearby. Enter the room to the north. You'll be attacked by a Fetid Rat—cousin to Vanguard Keep's Cellar Rat—and find the Old Mine Key and a chest containing 175 GP. Use the key to open the door to the south, and bear east.

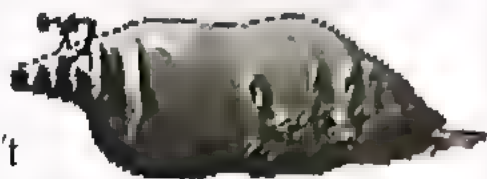






Welcome to Fetid Rat Land. I don't know what could have given me the idea there weren't many monsters in the West Mines. These particular guys are all over the place. Unfortunately, the twisty passages prevent you from opening up on them with ranged weapons. However, the same twists conspire to keep the rats from ganging up on you, when they have a better chance of landing a hit.

Bearing east and north, you'll eventually come to a large, irregularly-shaped room. Along the way, you may encounter a new monster, the Giant Maggot. Lovely. It looks like an overgrown snail and is distinguished largely by the walking-in-gravel and barfing sounds it makes when your weapons strike home. Don't give it a second thought. It's in the way, so it's dead.



Take the exit to the southeast, and at the "T" intersection, take the northern passage. This will lead into a large, dogleg-shaped room. Take the southern exit and follow the passage to the descending stairs that lead into the Old Mines.

### *Will There Be Anything Else?*

OK, we're there. Have we missed anything? Oh, sure. For most of the trip, we've stayed on the periphery of the West Mine. Its central, northeast, and southeast sections have remained largely a mystery, and, for the most part, can remain so unless you're really desperate for gold and experience points. (There's the odd chest, potion, and vein of gold here and there.)

However ... <grin> there are a few garden spots worth seeking out. And in keeping with our policy of leaving no stone unturned, here's a checklist of Other Neat Places to Go:

- ◆ In fact, one's not that far away. In the far southeast corner of the map (at coordinates 61,59,1752), there is a second entrance to the Old Mine. In fact, this is ultimately the more important of the two. To find it, return to the dogleg-shaped chamber and take the east exit. This leads into the southeast part of the map. It's a torturous path, but easy enough to follow using your automap. (Here, once again, the game designers are foreshadowing elements that crop up later in the game. Your exploration of Karegh-Konan will involve three interlocking levels with multiple entrances.)



- ◆ Also in the southeastern portion of the mine, just north of the second entrance to the Old Mines, is a 3,000 GP treasure trove. It's at 61,55,1752.
- ◆ A whole slew of useful items can be found in the south-central portion of the map. This area is most easily reached by the east and west passages just north of the mine's center. Make a quest of it, and grab them all in one fell swoop. A Wand of Magic—the mana restoring device last seen in the inner circle of the Vanguard Keep Towers—can be obtained at 40,45,1752. The Boots of Balance, which add 20 points to the wearer's Acrobatics skill, are at 60,32,1752. A Heavy Crossbow is at 38,42,1752. A fair number of chests, containing random items and small sums of cash, can also be collected along the way. The drawback: The place is full of Giant Maggots and Fetid Rats.
- ◆ There's even some stuff on this level that you can't reach. That's right. The cave-ins block access to a long east-west tunnel in the southern part of the mine and a short east-west tunnel in the far northeastern part of the mine. You'll have to find some other way to get there. Hint: It's not close.

And now we really are done. Return to the first exit we found, and descend the stairs into the Old Mines.

## Old Mines

I can tell you right now that you're not going to like this level on sight. For one thing, you enter almost in the middle (at 31,40,352). (There's something nice about having a wall behind you until you get your bearings, y'know!)

For another, it makes the Troll Caves and the East Mines look positively well-organized. The "old" in the name seems to mean the mine has almost been tapped out. Consequently, there are very few areas that aren't filled with meandering tunnels, and without constant reference to your automap and compass, it's hard to tell where you are at any given moment.

Finally, the miners from the West Mines who came down to demolish the passages here (see the "Old Mine Mission" document) seem to have done a really professional job. You'll find your path blocked by cave-ins in many directions, and so you'll spend a lot of time backtracking.



The only good news is that the mine is broken up into discrete chunks. This makes it easier to explore and, much as in the Troll Caves, you should set an agenda for yourself and take on these chunks one by one.

### *Getting Started*

With those cautions in mind, head off to the west. A door should turn up here on your automap (Figure 6-2). You'll have to pick the lock. (If that's a problem, look for the Mine Foreman's Key and Cure Poison potion to the east at map coordinates 36,38,352.) Take the plate pot helm, Magical Broadsword and documents called "Old Mines Desc." and "The Nether Beast" from the closet in this room.

**Figure 6-2.**

Inside this room, you'll find documents critical to your understanding of the Old Mines.



Well, this is why the level is empty. The documents report that the Dwarves here felt the mine was haunted by a particularly savage beast that seemed only to grow in strength from encounter to encounter. It was trapped within magical wards by mages from the Radiant Order, and "The Nether Beast" ends with an admonition that the monster must never be released.

You'll have to deal with the creature soon, but not right away. At the moment, the only creature you're likely to encounter is the Chaos Rat—a slightly harder version of the Cellar and Fetid breeds. However, you're





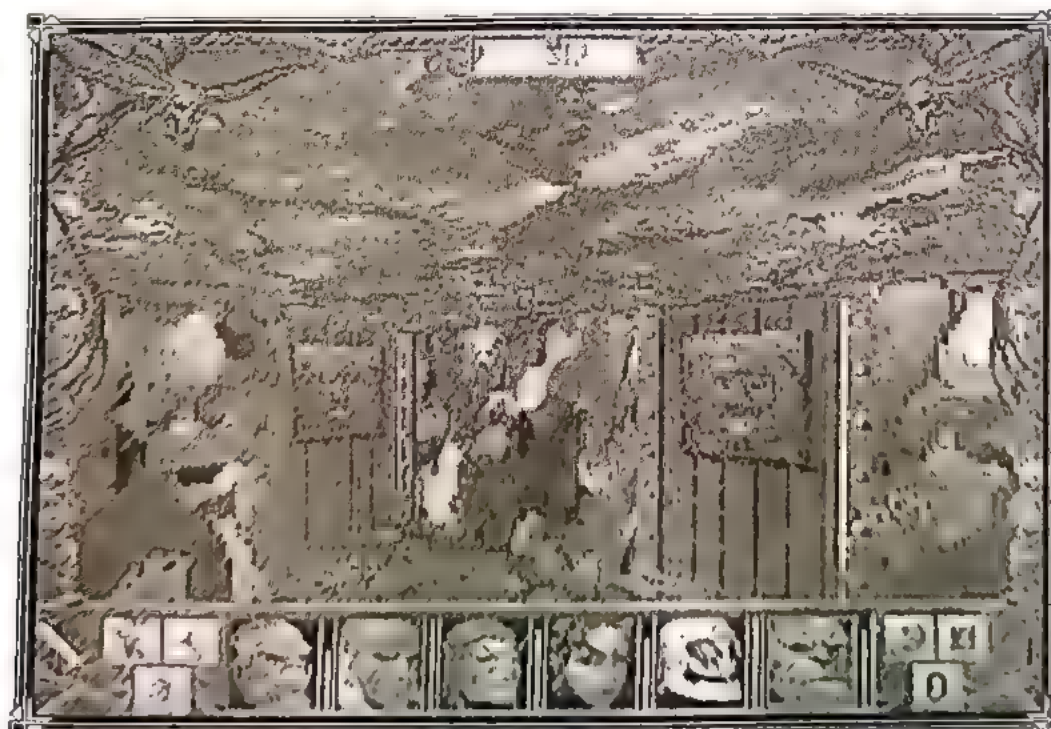
seeing only a small part of the mine. This section proves to be blocked off in every direction. Return to the stairs, climb back up to the West Mines and make your way east to the second entrance at 61,55,1752.

### *Getting Started Again*

When you descend the stairs, you'll be at 54,49,367 on the Old Mines map. Be ready for the possibility of a protracted fight when you arrive at the foot of the stairs. The Carrion Worm, a green cousin to the Giant Maggot, inhabits this region in substantial numbers. They will burn the party with acid, and you'll take more serious damage than usual in these encounters, but they're not a real threat.

Head south at first opportunity. You'll find two branching corridors leading off to empty rooms. Ignore them, but follow the third eastern corridor to the room at its end. Here you'll find a Flash scroll and an Ice Missile Spellbook. (If all your spellcasters have this spell, save the book to donate to a less-experienced caster or to sell later. Spellbooks always bring a nice price.)

Head back to the main corridor and follow it southwest. Well, now you're getting someplace! You'll eventually come to a large chamber with doors to the west and south (Figure 6-3) and a little corridor off the northwest corner.



**Figure 6-3.**  
The right-hand of  
these two doors  
holds your future.



## *With A Bang, Not A Whimper*

Follow the northwest corridor to its western tip, and you'll find a Mana scroll, the Amulet of the Void (which protects against cold and death attacks), and a cave-in. Return to the main room and open the southern door. You'll find a pair of potions. Inside this room, open the closet to the east, and you'll also find chain armor and the Mine Storage Room Key.

Storage room ... storage room ... does that ring a bell? It should. "The Nether Beast" document reports that this is where the dwarves fought that creature, and presumably, where they trapped it.

That may well make you think twice before you take the next step. Return to the main room and open the western door. Here, in a large, square room, you'll find a single barrel.

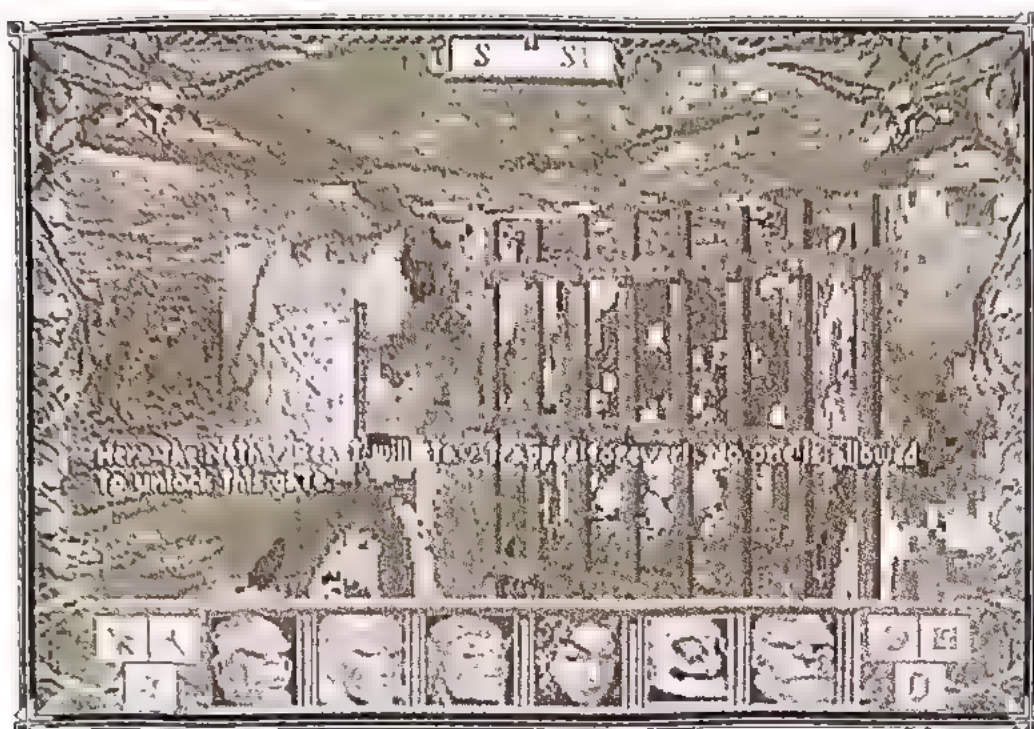
Such barrels as the game has offered up to this point—mainly at Finea's—have been dedicatedly non-interactive. Not this one. Click on it and you'll learn it's a powder keg and have a chance to light the fuse.

Light it and run! The party will be OK if it makes it back to the doorway before the blast. Return and see what gunpowder hath wrought. Well, there's now a Carrion Worm on the loose. (Kill it.) There's a huge crater in the floor. (Walk through it to see how deep it is.) Veins of gold, previously concealed, can now be mined for 4,400 GP.

A room has been opened to the southwest. Blood and guts are spattered everywhere, and its walls appear to have been gouged with ... claw marks.

Uh-oh.

Check out the corridor you've opened in the room's northwest corner to confirm your worst fears. You'll find a cave-in behind a locked gate and a sign: Here the Nether Beast will stay trapped forever! (Figure 6-4) "Forever" seems to have lasted exactly as long as it took for your party to reach the mines, schmuck. You didn't unlock the gate, but you blew through the wall. (Of course, it wasn't too smart of the dwarves to leave the powder barrel right there, was it?)



**Figure 6-4.**

Some RPG parties were born stupid. Others have stupidity thrust upon them.

### *In Nether, Nether Land ...*

You can expect the Nether Beast to put in an appearance anytime now. Don't freak out. This isn't the Dwarven Mines' version of the Dark One. In a way, it's much worse.

You won't realize it right away. Initially, this tougher incarnation of the Mountain Cat and Red Hellcat isn't much of a fighter, and you should be able to knock off its 200 HP using the standard attack without much trouble.

But every time you kill it, it comes back in ever-stronger incarnations. The next time it appears, it will have 300 HP, slightly stronger resistance to certain types of damage, and stronger and more varied attacks of its own. And the next time, 350 HP. And the next, 375, and so on. It is immortal, and killing it just gives you a temporary respite.



There are three solutions:

- 1) Run away, you cowards. Fight as needed, while it's weak, but make it a priority to get out of the mines as soon as possible. The Nether Beast will follow you into the East Mines, but not into Karegh-Konan.





- 2) Look at it as a challenge, and fight off all of the beast's incarnations. It can be done. Your party should be semi-invincible at this point, and you're probably weary of carving up rats and maggots. The Nether Beast is the only critter in here that stands a shot at making you look bad.
- 3) Look at the spell list in the manual. Did the word "nether" catch your eye in the description of the Banish spell? Cast at high or full mana, this incantation stands a good chance of sending a creature to the nether world, which is just the place for a Nether Beast.

## Exploration

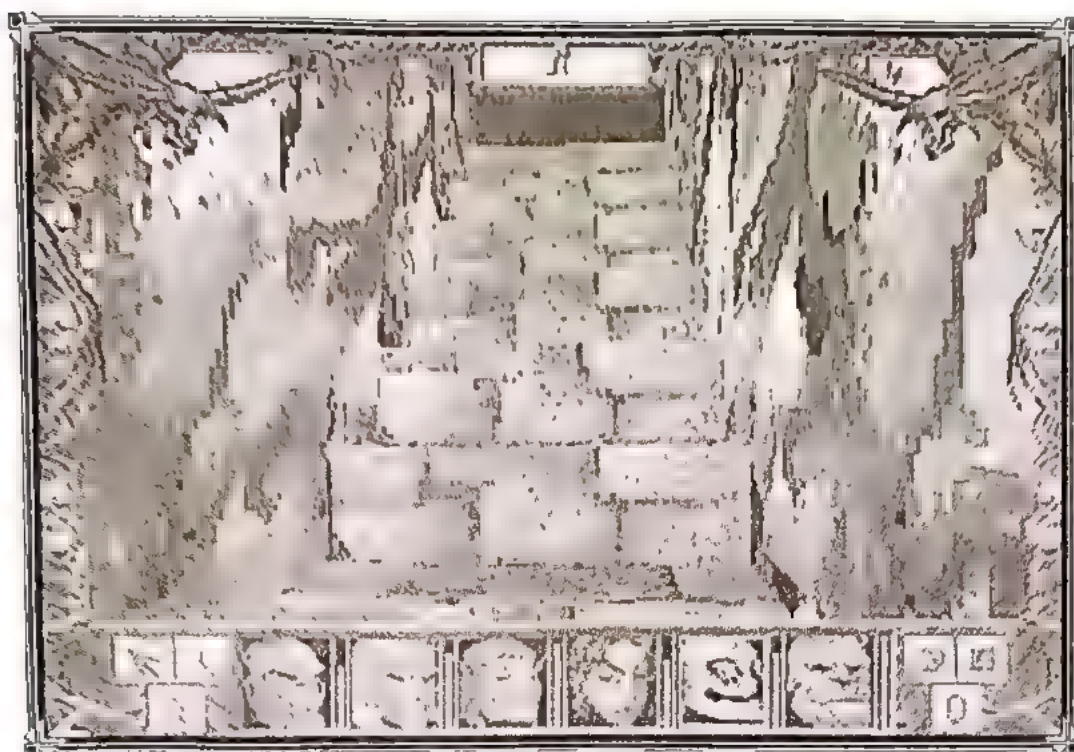
At any rate, one good thing has come of this: The Old Mines are open for you to explore. Chart a consistent course to the northwest, and you can't go wrong. When the passage branches south and west (at 15,47,352), go west and you'll wind up in a large room. Take the Death Dealer dagger and the book, *The Cutter's Edge*, which enhances a character's Knife skill by 50 points. You'll find Discipline Elixir (which increases a character's Will stat by one point) up the northernmost of the two corridors off the northwest corner. And if you're of a mind for treasure hunting, the area south and southwest of this room contains a pair of chests—one containing 1,000 GP.

Exit the large room to the north and take your first right. Throw the switch at the end of the hall. Take a step back from the switch, head north, and then turn east. You'll see a raised area and a button on the east wall.

Push it. This will open a hidden corridor just to the west at 13,32,336. Enter it and head east. The east end is blocked by yet another cave-in, so bear north, east, and north again in a long loop. This takes the party across to the east part of the map. (There's also one substantial side-path to the east—beginning at 22,28,352—that takes you to a chest.)

This corridor eventually will turn south, and you'll see a pair of corridors leading farther east. The southern of the two leads into a pillared room that contains a Mana potion and Wilhelm's Wand (which casts a Mana Bolt spell).

The northern one (which is very long) takes you to the stairs up to the East Mines (Figure 6-5) and, further west, to a large and twisty maze with the occasional chest. A quick dash west and then south will turn up a cache of solid armor—notably plate chest armor and plate great helm.



**Figure 6-5.**

These stairs lead up to the final level of the mines.

But for the most part, this maze isn't worth the bother. Nor is most of the level—a lot of it is just plain empty and nondescript—so you can take those stairs to the East Mines without fear of passing up something wonderful.

### *The Best of the Rest*

However, for the persevering few, here are some notes on interesting items at the ends of the earth:

- ◆ The northern section of the mine is a sprawling labyrinth. It can be reached either by the warren to the west of the East Mines stairs, or via a room northwest of the secret corridor that led you to those stairs. It holds one item of real value: the King's Ransom. This chest, containing 5,000 GP, can be found at 52,11,352 in the most distant northeastern room in this maze. (A number of similar chests turn up later in the game.)
- ◆ However, the far northwestern section of the mine is its own distinct unit, and, in terms of treasure-per-square-foot, it's relatively rich. It can be reached by a single passage beginning at 8,27,352. Within this area, you'll find around a half-dozen treasure locations with about 2,000 in gold and cash, an Herbal Remedy and a range of medical potions, and random equipment.



- ◆ Check out the room just northeast of the spot where you arrived when you made your second descent into the Old Mines. Just curve around to the north to find the door. This chamber contains a Major Heal potion, a Healing potion, and two Cure Poison potions.
- ◆ Rats! There's still no way to get into those cut-off sections of the West Mines. It figures: If you check the coordinates, you'll see that only part of the Old Mines is under the West Mines.

You'll get luckier in the East Mines. Onward and upward!

## East Mines



Not surprisingly, the East Mines is, stylistically, a combination of the two mine levels that preceded it. The portions to the north and east reflect some of the chaos of the Old Mines, while those to the south and west have the more orderly layout of the West Mines. Either way, it's much easier to get around, and the creatures are a little easier to handle, with the Giant Maggot replacing the Carrion Worm.

You've almost reached Karegh-Konan. The entrance to the Dwarven city lies off to the northeast. There's no real trick to getting there from the East Mines—this is a more of an item-collecting level—but it's a long and crooked path and this final section of the mines is bound to provide some distractions of its own.

## Getting While the Getting is Good

The stairs bring you into the northwest part of the mine in an area rich in items and poor in opponents. So go get those items! The most important is just to the north. Pick the lock on the door just up the hall and get the Herbal Remedy from the floor and the shovel and the Ring of Warmth (which naturally offers protection against cold attacks) from the table.

**Note:** Don't go running back to the earlier sections of the mine with the shovel in hopes of clearing collapsed passages. The shovel is an important item, but it has one very specific purpose.





In the room up the short hall to the northeast of your starting location, get the Cure Disease potion. Visit the room across the hall to the south and get a Breathe Fire scroll. Bear south, using the corridor just west of this room, and get the chest and the Cure Poison potion in the chamber shaped like an inverted "C." Continue south down this corridor, bear west at the fork and get the Mana potion. (Isn't it just amazing what people leave lying around on the floor?)

## *The Lockless Key*

The area farther north doesn't seem too promising. To the west, it leads to a blocked tunnel and, to the east, a spiritless warren of empty tunnels. It's not a place anyone's likely to go. And it's the perfect place to hide something of immense value.

From the top of the stairs, go straight north as far as you can and then take a short jaunt to the northeast. This will put you in an east-west passage. Follow it as it bears south and east. At the four-way intersection, head north and then follow the passage east and south again. At the next intersection, bear east and then north.

You should now be at 27,3,427, with your nose to a wall and a support pillar to your right rear.

Now, turn east and follow the passage straight until you see a large vein of gold in the south wall at 34,3,427. Click on it. You'll learn that the gold can't be extracted. Click on it again.

Well, what do you know. Something seems to have fallen out of the crack in the wall. Not gold, but a Lockless Key. It looks like any other key in your inventory, but it has one very specific purpose much later in the game.

You can thank me when you get to the Catacombs.

## *Drazil, Drazil, Drazil, We Found You Under Clay...*

Something else vital is close by. Bear east from your starting location and continue until you receive a report of the smell of rotten flesh. Cird yourself, and turn southeast.



Oh my God. Skeletons! Skeletons everywhere. There was a pitched battle here—the Nocturnals did the grunt work, and the rats did the rest—and the floor is still slippery with blood. Something seems to have been dragged through the morass as well. A trail leads off to the southeast.

Follow it. Along the way, if you don't feel you're being too mercenary, get the Healing potion and the 175 GP from the chest in a room to the west.

At the left-hand of the two southern passages, you'll learn that there seem to have been as many as a dozen survivors, and that the trail has turned south. Keep following the directions in the messages, continuing east, south, and east again, and you'll wind up in a room with a recess in the east wall.

Walk up to the recess. The trail ends here, and the party can hear scratching behind the wall of caved-in debris.

It is here (and only here) that the shovel comes in handy. Click it on the wall of debris. The rubble will vanish and a Rapacian from the Radiant Order, named Lord Drazil, will emerge from the rubble. He'll explain that his patrol was ambushed by the Nocturnal army and he was trapped by the cave-in. (There's no explanation of what became of the other survivors.)

Drazil wants to join you. You're at your limit of six party members, and if you like, you can tell him "we're full up, thanks!"

But don't even think about it. Drazil is a natural fighter: Level 20, 301 hit points, a Pole Arm skill of 325, decent skills in several other weapons, with a wicked-looking pitchfork called the Trident of Ages in hand. And he's clad from head to toe in Manite chain armor (Figure 6-6). Is this a hero or is this a hero?

Sadly, this means you have to drop a character. The natural choice is Prototype 17—your newest and, well, least compelling character. (I mean, he's a robot, y'know?) Turn his belongings over to Drazil for sale later in Lower Karegh-Konan.

"Let's go," says Drazil. Couldn't have put it better myself! Get the chest from the room to the north, return to the room where you rescued Drazil, and exit to the south.

Well, maybe there are other survivors after all! When leaving the room, and again if you head into the tunnel to the west, you'll receive messages that indicate a faint trail of bloody footprints continuing east along the mine-cart tracks.



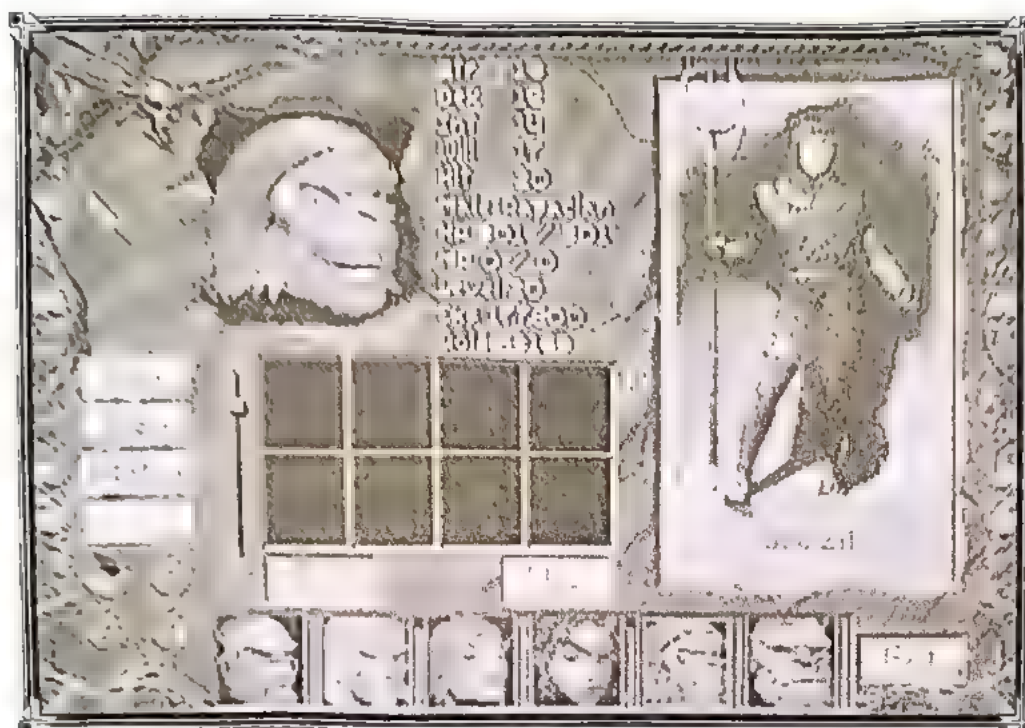


Figure 6-6.

Drazil in his  
Sunday best

Follow the tracks if only to satisfy your curiosity. They don't go far. The blood trail and mine tracks end at a blank wall. Passages do lead north and south, but there's no evidence of anyone's passage to the north and, to the south, well, if any survivors went in there, they're not survivors any more. It's a major den of Giant Maggots. You're quite capable of clearing it out, but there's nothing to see.

Head back to the west along the mine tracks, stopping to collect the chest from a room to the south. The tracks continue west through an "S" curve and then hit a straight-away ... which disappears into blackness at the mine's west wall (Figure 6-7).

Could it be? It could! This rail line runs into that sealed-off corridor in the southern part of the West Mines. At the end, just before the cave-in, you'll find another Ring of Reflexes and a Strength potion. Grab them, and make your way back into the East Mine. Smiling! You should be. It's always nice to tie up a loose end.

Along the way, have a look at a graphical oddity in the north wall—it's glitch, not something to interact with—and search the rooms off the south side of the tracks.





**Figure 6-7.**

This East Mine rail line leads into an otherwise inaccessible part of the West Mines.



Nope, I'm not sending you after a bunch of ordinary Cure Poison potions. Head west after you enter the first door and you'll find yourself in a little cul-de-sac with three locked doors. One contains a Mana potion, an Acid Rain Spellbook and a Lightning Bolt scroll; the second, a Wand of Whispers, a Fireball scroll and a chest; and the third, a Cure Disease potion and another chest. Further east, you can find Herbal Remedy. The only drawback is that you're in Giant Maggot territory here, and may have a crowd of them waiting for you when you make for the exit.



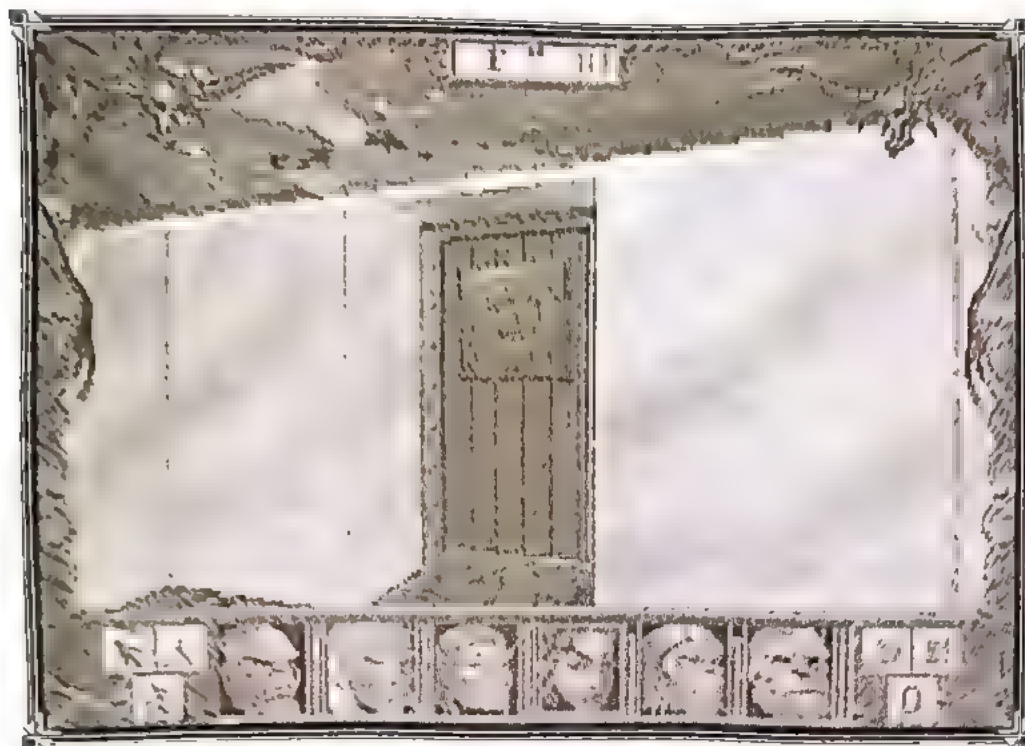
Finally, use the bridge that begins at coordinates 11,53,452 to reach a pair of locked rooms north of the tracks. The one to the west contains a Strength potion, the one to the east Plate Mail Boots.

You've effectively cleaned out the western and southern sections of the East Mines. Now it's time to explore the more twisty section to the north and east. Return to the mine-car tracks and follow them east as you did earlier when looking for survivors of the battle up north.

Bear north at the end and then east into a large room with three northern exits. The western one will get you where you're going, but the center is more direct. At the three junctions you'll encounter, bear north, west, and north, respectively, and you'll find the Amulet of Vigor (which



increases resistance to poison) and a Cure Poison potion (60,23,452). Back up to the last junction and this time bear west and north. In no time, you'll be looking at the gleaming gate into Karegh-Konan (Figure 6-8).



**Figure 6-8.**  
The shining portal  
to the Dwarven  
city of Karegh-  
Konan

Whew! Never thought you'd make it, did you?

Well, you have and you haven't. You're not quite done with the mines. A few nonessential side quests remain that may pique your interest.

- ◆ There were two inaccessible areas in the West Mines. We've only managed to reach one of them (via the mine tracks). The other was a section of the collapsed Dwarven Highway in that mine's far northeast corner. Now the whole northern boundary of the East Mines consists of that same road. What do you say we follow it west from the city gate and see where it goes?

Bingo! It goes right into northeast corner of the West Mines, and you can finally collect the mace known as Bone Crusher and the requisite Cure Poison potion. (The mace adds 25 points to the user's Axe/mace skill and does double damage to skeletal creatures.)

- ◆ The far southeastern section of the mine is a square circuit marked by the occasional support pillar and visitation from Fetid Rats.



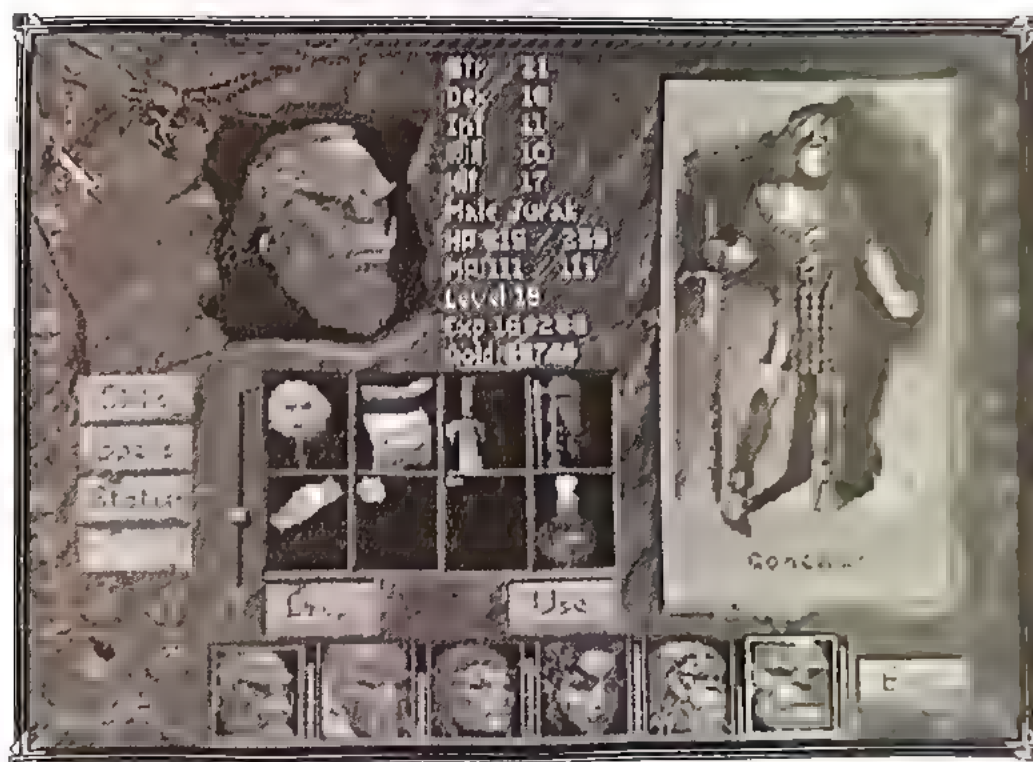




In an inner loop can be found a barbed sword known as Ripper, which adds 30 points to the user's Sword skill (Figure 6-9).

- ◆ The only area remaining unexplored is a large, nebulous region north and northeast of the cave-in from which the party plucked Lord Drazil. It's most easily reached by the southernmost of the two eastern exits from the battlefield room, and by the passage that leads north from the eastern terminus of the mine tracks.

**Figure 6-9.**  
His outfit? Ruck's.  
His sword? The  
Ripper. His long-  
distance telephone  
company? I dunno.  
What's a telephone?



It's not especially dangerous. It's just a matter of how many Fetid Rats you care to wade through. Most of the treasure is of a mundane sort—mostly potions and chests—and rarely, if ever, is it going to be something you desperately need at this stage of the game.

However, the Magic Two-Handed Axe at 36, 19, 452 would be a good find under any circumstances—especially since high-level Axe/mace weapons are few compared to swords and pole arms.

There's also an interesting oddity at 30, 18, 452—a skeleton and a blank document titled "Rescue Drazil." This is a minor bug; there's supposed to be a message here. If you wish, you can assume the writer didn't live to finish it, or that the title was the whole point.

At any rate, that quest is done at this point and so are we. Return to the gate of Karegh-Konan, click on the door, and enter the great underground home of the Dwarves of Aden.





## Karegh-Konan & Suburbs

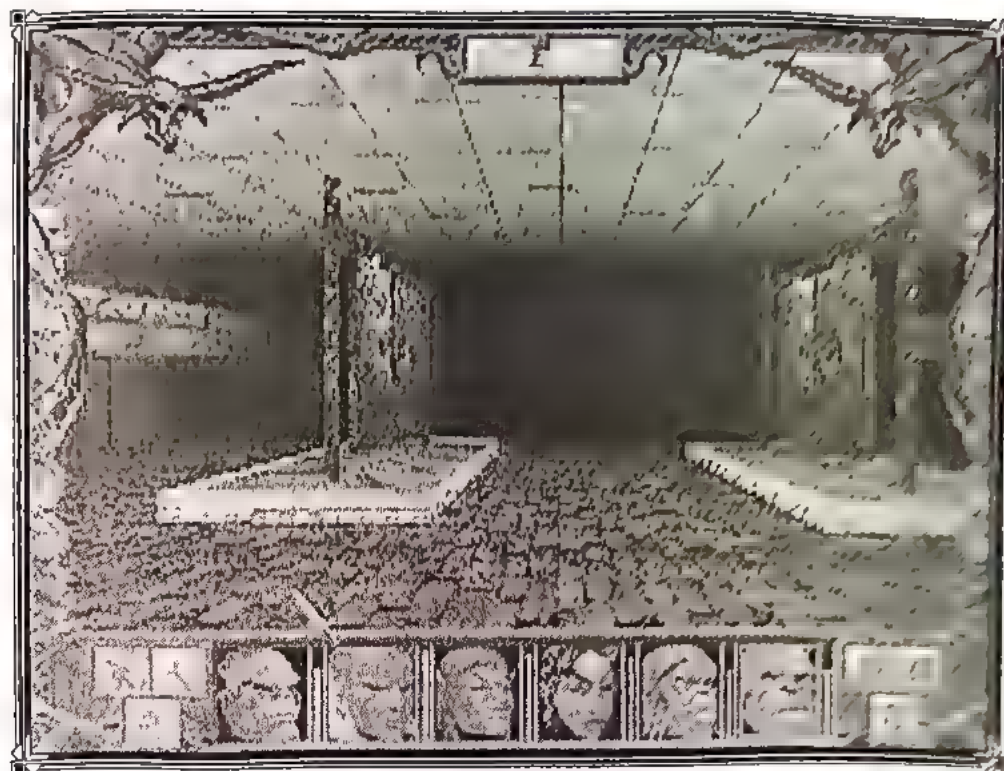
*The party explores a huge Dwarven city and labyrinth of connected caves, finds another shop, indulges in a little grave-robbing, helps the Dwarves get on with their lives (but also kills a whole lot of them), and reaches the caves beneath the Radiant Citadel.*

### **The Foyer**

It is as though you have walked into a tomb. The great Dwarven city of Karegh-Konan is dark and silent (Figure 7-1), and you will sense immediately that something is not right. The Nocturnals are here, and they are waiting for you.



**Figure 7-1.**  
Darkness awaits in  
Karegh-Konan.



Strike the two gongs, enter the north gate and the two armory rooms beyond. Restraint, please, people! By now, your inventory is full to bursting from your trip through the mines, and you'll need to be picky about what you take. The only items here likely to strike your fancy—or fulfill a need—are the two pairs of gold chain leggings and plate mail boots.

This would be a fine time to trim your stock of possessions. (For instance, most of the party should be casting *Dispel* by now and you don't really need *Cure Poison* and *Cure Disease* potions.) In fact, from this point on, I'll restrict references to found equipment to those cases where it equals or exceeds the party's current level of ordinance.

Return to the foyer and check out the inscriptions on the east wall.

First inscription:

*Leave the ends through the middle.*

Second inscription:

*For choir to sing in grandest voice.  
One will be blessed to lead by choice.  
The second seeks hallowed unity.  
Two sings as one in harmony*



Third inscription:

*One in choosing,  
Two in striking,  
Eons in ruling,  
Honorable Dwarven King.*

That last one's almost a haiku. You could read these a number of ways, but the overall suggestion seems to be one of multiplicity. And, in this respect, Karegh-Konan is something completely different for *Thunderscape*. You know how it is with most levels: You get in at one end, you explore the middle, and you get out at the other end.

Here, it's not so simple. The taste of multiple entrances and exits you got in the mines is the rule here. You'll go through Karegh-Konan and Lower Karegh-Konan a minimum of twice each, and the Founder's Cave at least once, to reach the Final Gates that lead to the caves beneath the Radiant Citadel. So don't worry if it seems you're leaving a level prematurely. Chances are, you'll be back.

However, there's only one usable route into Karegh-Konan proper from this theater-like lobby, so use the southern gate and follow the corridor to the city's formal entrance.

***Note:** You may have noticed a slight breeze coming from the westernmost panel in the north wall just east of the entrance. There is a passage here but you can't use it until much later in this section of the game.*

## **Karegh-Cheaton**

Before you head south, however, you should know there's a subtle (and potentially monstrous) cheat in the Karegh-Konan foyer.

*Thunderscape* handles experience points differently than many other role-playing games. It awards them, not just for killing monsters, but for a whole host of different activities: finding treasure, solving puzzles, exploring and so on.





Small surprise, then, that it awards the party 5,000 experience points for bashing the northern gong in the foyer and opening up the armory.

And here's where the cheat comes in. Y'see, you don't get 5,000 experience points once, but *every time* you whack it. I've taken a party up to more than 1,000,000 experience points—roughly the equivalent of a Level 70 character—in a few seconds by just repeatedly clicking the mouse on the gong.

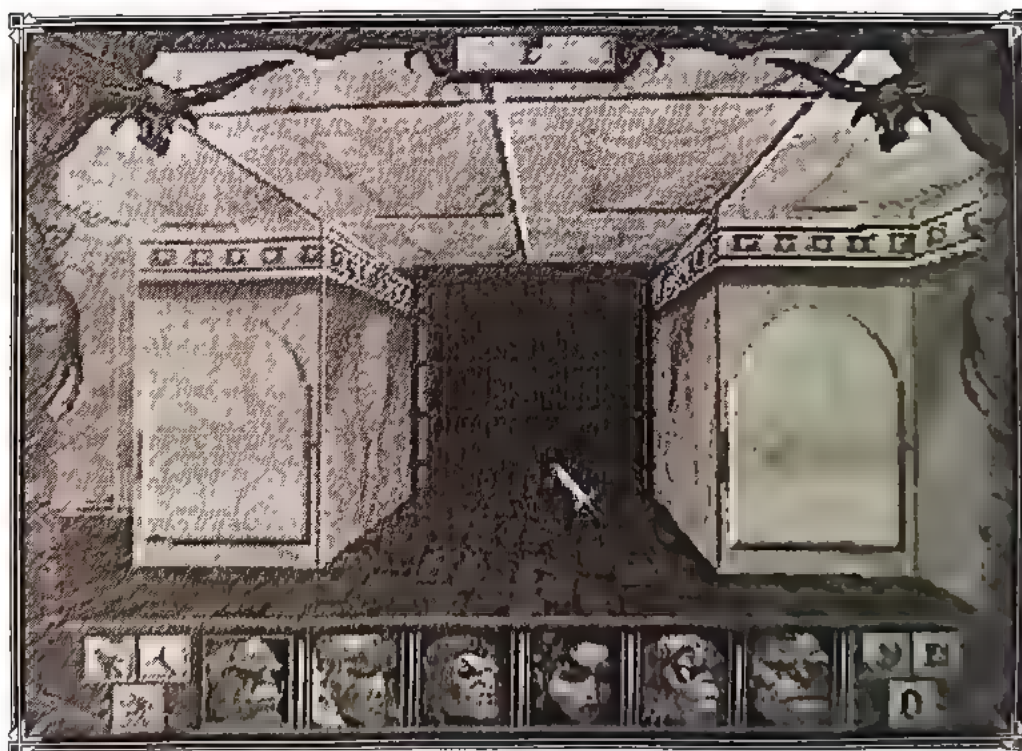
Needless to say, this has the ability to give a nice little boost to an experience-poor party that's having trouble making progress in the game.

However, don't abuse this little godsend. For it's also an effective way to destroy *Thunderscape's* play balance.

### ***Locked Out?***

At the end of the hall, you'll find another gate (Figure 7-2). Open it and enter a large room. Within, the silence continues. The Office of Trans-Urban Commerce and Registration! Empty. The nearby structures! Also empty, for all intents and purposes.

**Figure 7-2.**  
The entrance to the  
city proper



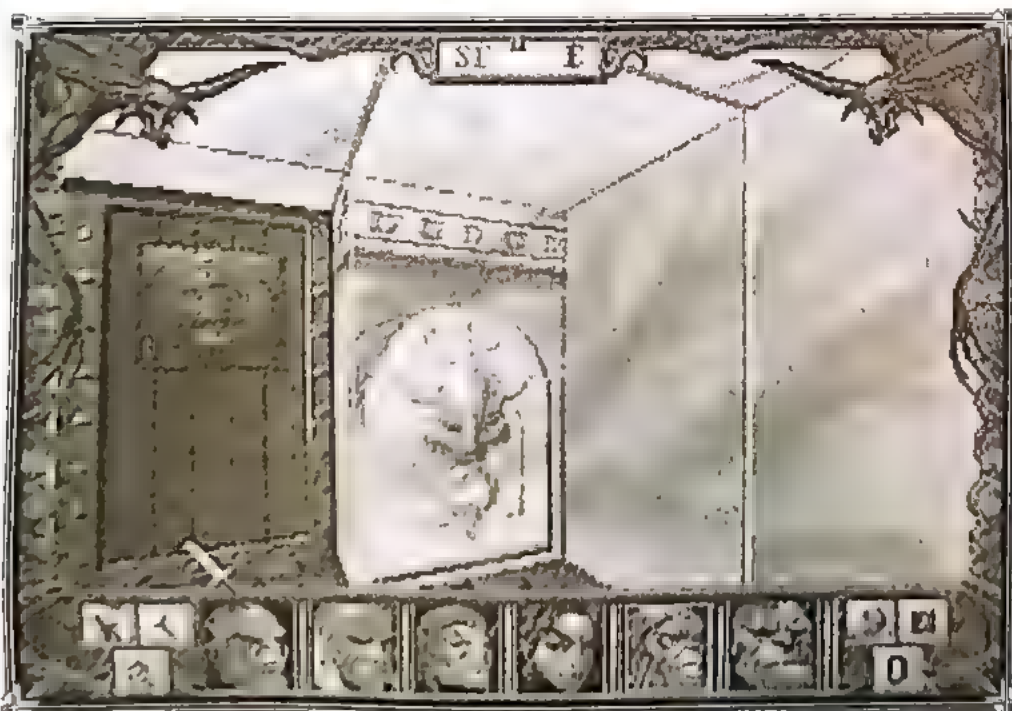
You can climb the stairs to the balcony overlooking the foyer from the south and enter a few bland rooms. But the great iron-bound doors in the north wall are locked tight.



Naturally, there's a way out. You may have missed it once, even twice, because of the uniform wall panels, but there's a second set of stairs (Figure 7-3) leading up to the east. (This is located in the structure straight north from the entrance.) At the top of the stairs, there's a balcony overlooking the double doors, a potion or two and ... a switch! Throw it, and the locked doors below will fly open. Hop down, enter the passage, and keep going until you reach a door with a Dwarven symbol (Figure 7-4) beside it.



**Figure 7-3.**  
These stairs will hasten your entry into Karegh-Konan.



**Figure 7-4.**  
Hello! My name's Balin, son of Fundin! What's yours!





## Downtown Karegh-Konan

Once you open this door, you'll be in for a fight. This many-doored, northwest-southeast areaway is occupied by a half-dozen Dark Dwarves, the lowest-common-denominator monster of Karegh-Konan. Several tougher variations exist, but these guys, with 200 HP each, should be handled easily by the party.

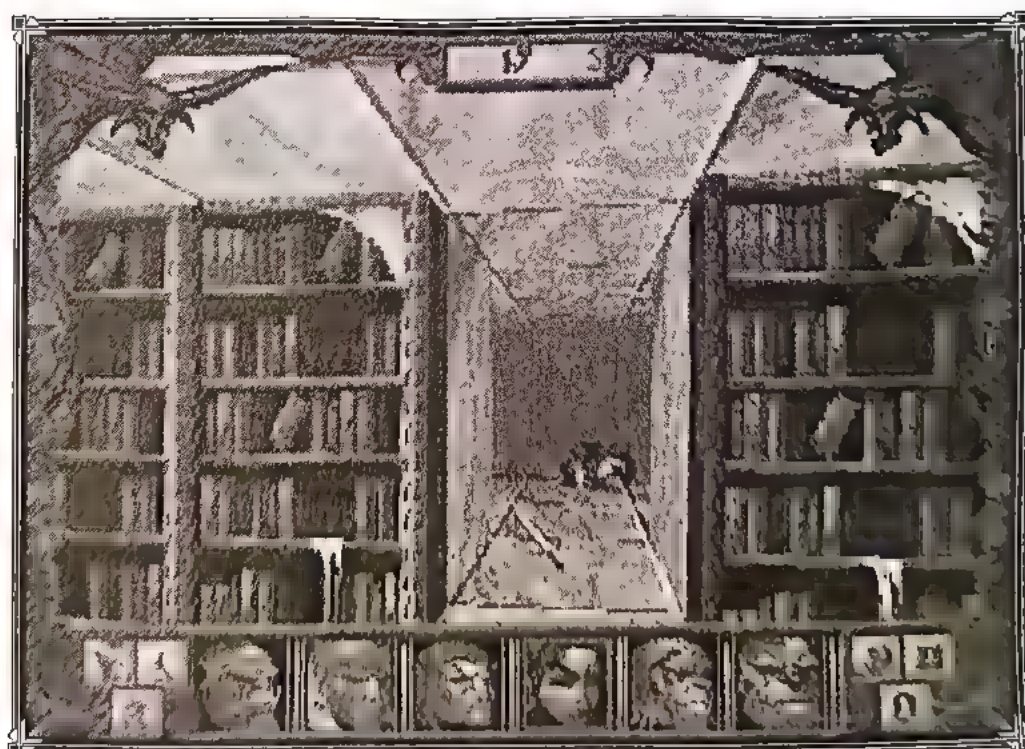


Open the double doors to the south and get the mithril plate boots and mithril chain leggings. Yeah, I know what I just said about not loading up your inventory, but mithril is the next step up from plate mail. (You may have found some mithril helms in random weapons chests earlier in the game.)

This seems to be the business district, but alas, there is no weapons shop. The main thing that does seem to be available is information. To the south, at the Motherhouse of Clan Char, you'll find a note that refers fleetingly to the "Founder's Cave." (It reports that it's outside the city and well-guarded.) The Apothecary Shop to the northwest has a little background on the city, and the barrister's office offers an interesting diary and a book, *The Hammer Stroke*, devoted to Konan's mace techniques, which improves a character's Axe/mace skill by 50 points.

**Figure 7-5.**

Someone must have used Armor-All on these shelves!







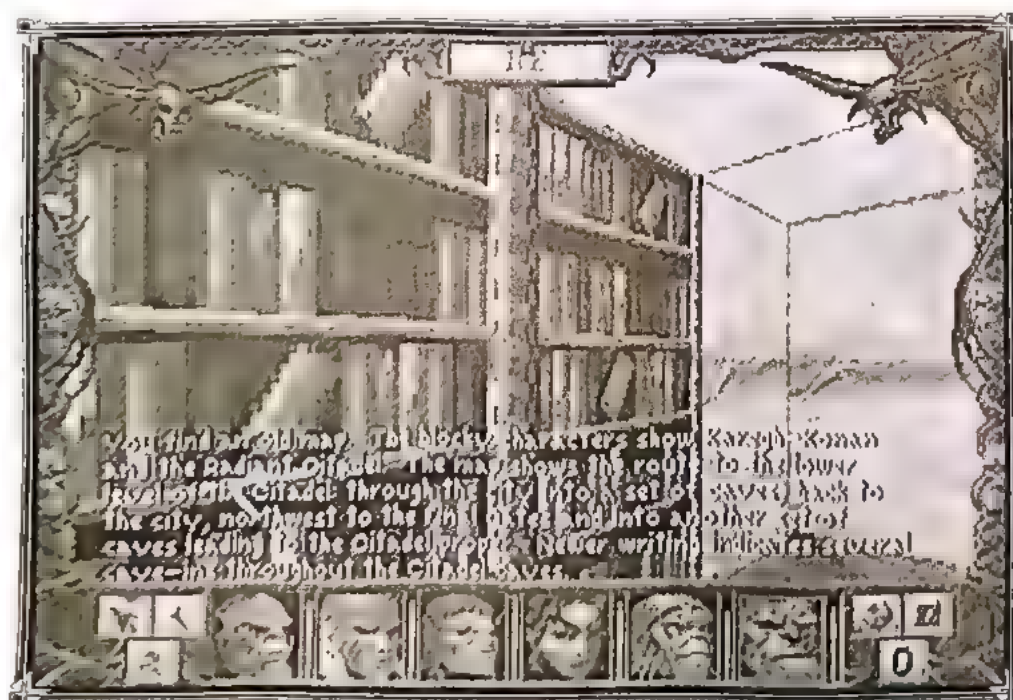
However, there's also a sizable horde behind the right-hand bookcase at Clan Char (Figure 7-5). Do get the Thaumaturge's Ring (which adds 20 points to a character's Cast Spells skill) and, if needed, plate mail leggings.

Upstairs, kill the two Dark Dwarves and, in the room to the east, get the Radiant Diamond Amulet (which grants increased resistance to disease). Finally, climb the stairs just west of the Barrister's Office and get the treasure and the chest in the back room.

Well, you've cleaned out the area pretty nicely! Now try the barred gate to the southeast. Don't worry about the polluted fountain. Kill the trio of Dark Dwarves that move to meet you, turn south, and open the door to the west. Inside, check the left bookcase.

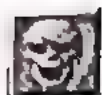
This is exactly just what you've been looking for (Figure 7-6)! It's a map showing a detailed course from Karegh-Konan to the Radiant Citadel's lower levels. It goes through the city into caves, back into the city, northwest to the Final Gates, and then into another set of caves. (There are also some additions showing recent cave-ins in the citadel caves.)

In fact, there are two separate levels of Karegh-Konan, and the doors just to the east lead to the lower city. Head for those doors.



**Figure 7-6.**  
New maps for old,  
new maps for old ...





## Lower Karegh-Konan



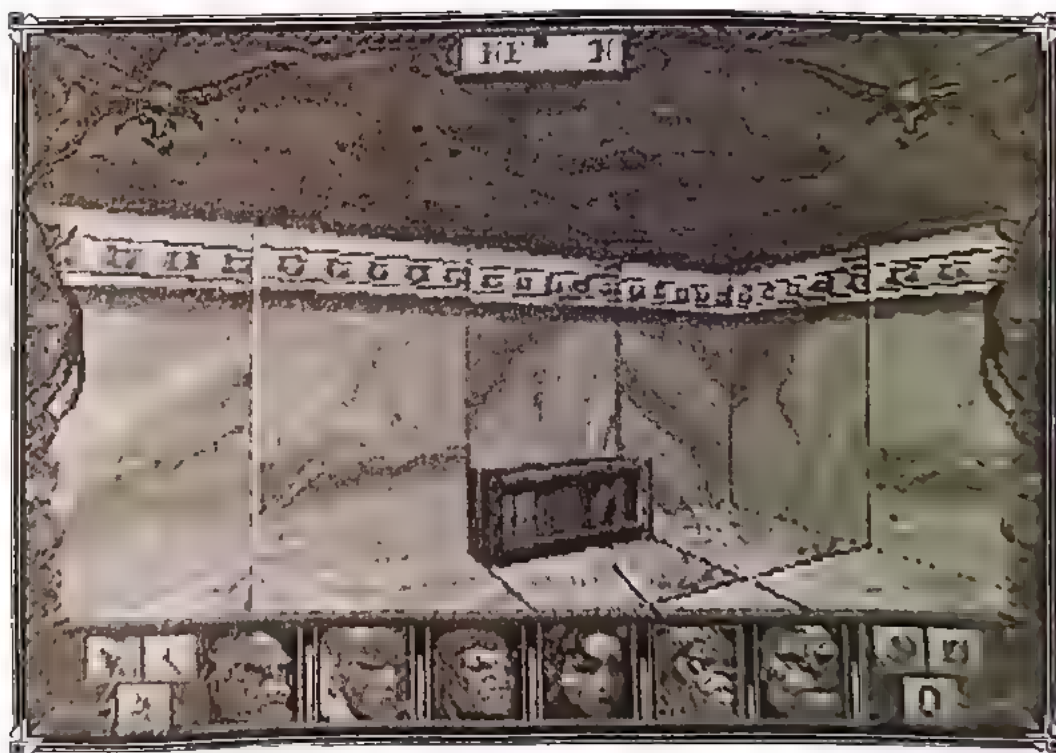
Kill the two Dark Dwarves and the accompanying Dark Warrior who attack you when you open the doors. Bear east, open the southern door just before the gate, and move two rooms to the south.

You'll be challenged immediately by a Dark Dwarf on the stairs to the west, and if you climb to the upper level after defeating him, you'll be in the first reasonably fair fight you've faced in a long time. To secure the room, you'll have to take on a squad of Dark Dwarves, and, after that, a group of Dark Warriors and a Dark Lieutenant with 400 HP. Ouch!

Some of the furniture in this large room is unique, but, unhappily, most of the equipment you'll find after the battle is old news. An exception is the *Archer's Handbook*, which you'll find by examining the bookcase (Figure 7-7) in the northeast part of the chamber. (It increases a character's Bow skill by 50 points.)

**Figure 7-7.**

A book in this shelf will put some back in your bow.



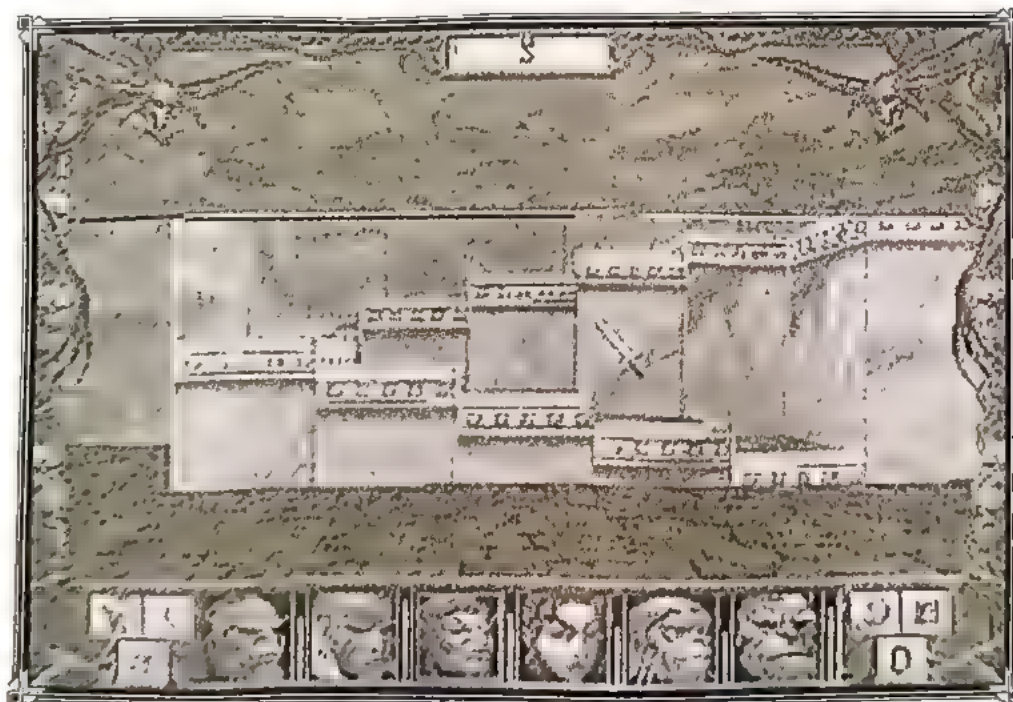
The rooms further east seem undistinguished—except for a strange hole in the ceiling of the easternmost chamber—so descend the stairs and try the other doors in the room at their foot. You'll find Pho Hum's Ring (which offers protection against acid), a Healing potion behind the western one, and a chest behind the southern door. Return to the corridor and open the gate to the east.



Here you'll face a series of skirmishes with Dark Dwarves, Warriors, and the odd Lieutenant—some charging the gate, some in fixed positions to the east, and some who'll trek in from a corridor to the south when they spot you. Once they've been cleared out, you can explore beyond the many doors with relative impunity.

But as you bear east, the same sensation of tingling-neck-hairs you may have had in Karegh-Konan returns in this suburb. The weapons you find are consistently mundane, the shiny-walled rooms consistently empty. Even stairs, whose presence is usually linked with a significant event, seem of little consequence here.

There's one blatant exception. This many-doored corridor eventually turns north. Right at the bend, you'll find a stand-alone structure to the east. Climb the stairs at its south side (Figure 7-8), and fight off the Dark Dwarves at the top and the Dark Warrior in the room to the north. Here you'll find a Wand of Undoing (which casts *Dispel*). Press on into the next room, and you'll find stairs leading up again. (Neat! This the first time we've found a dedicated three-story structure. It won't be the last.)



**Figure 7-8.**  
Up these steps lies trouble.







**Figure 7-9.**  
AAAAAR-  
RRGGGHHH-  
HH! FLOATING  
BRAINS! (Spoken  
with feeling while  
running in the  
opposite direction.)

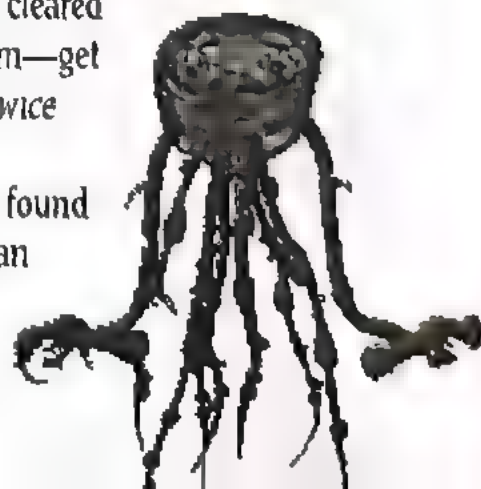
Climb the stairs, make sure your party is at peak health and mana, and then save your game. Then open the door and introduce yourself to the Floating Brains (Figure 7-9).



Aside from having by far the bloodiest death scene in *Thunderscape*, these jellyfish-like creatures have a command of magic like no enemy you've faced. They cast Slow, Charm, Death, and the wicked Maelstrom spells, and they cast them well. If you're playing at the "hard" level, you may well find yourself staggering out of the building with party members dead and dying.

The best way to respond is in kind. Hit the Brains hard and quickly with spells and scrolls. (They're vulnerable to weapons, but your weapons are vulnerable to their Slow spell.) Once they're cleared out—there's more than one concentration of them—get the Elixir of Might from the corner and throw twice the lever that you'll find in an alcove.

Remember that odd hole in the ceiling you found a bit earlier in a building to the west? Well, it's an elevator shaft. Your two pulls on the lever order the elevator to descend and activate its ascent once you step on the platform.

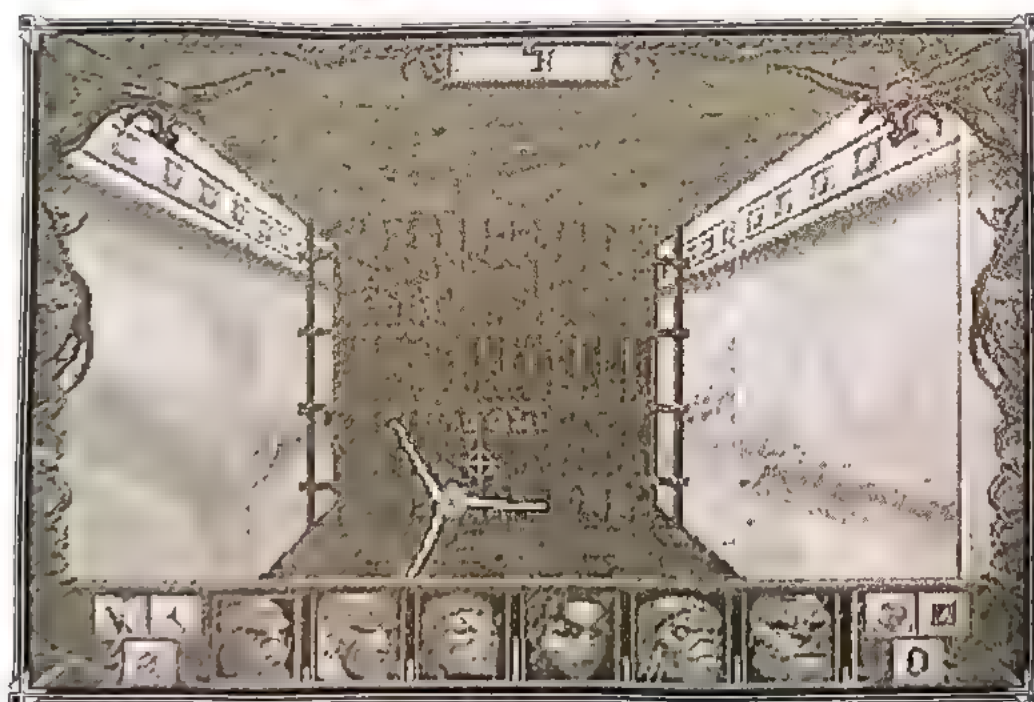
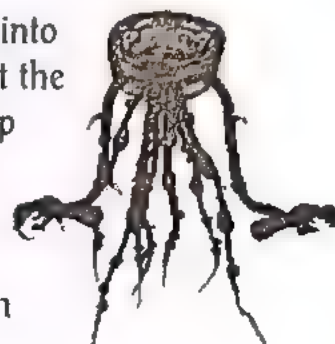




**Note:** Be sure you step all the way on. It's a very narrow platform, and it's quite possible to crush your party against the ceiling by mistake.

At the top, you'll find a very nice little cache of supplies. However, this pales beside what you'll find behind the secret door to the west. There you'll find the hammer War Monger, a Death Spellbook, a Needler pistol, mithril plate chest armor, and a mithril great helm. Wow! War Monger in particular is a find, it not only adds 30 points to user's Axe/mace skill, but doubles the effect of berserk attacks.

Take the elevator back down and head north to the gates into the Founder's Cave (Figure 7-10). Open the inner gate, but not the outer one. Instead, use your old technique from Vanguard Keep and use ranged weapons—in particular that venerable Magic Heavy Crossbow—to shoot down the two Floating Brains, three Dark Warriors, and various Dark Dwarves in the outer courtyard. This will take some time, but it is far less arduous an assignment than fighting them off hand-to-hand. (This way, they can't hit back.)



**Figure 7-10.**

Use ranged weapons to zap the monsters on the other side of the gate to the Founder's Cave.





## The Founder's Cave



This leg of the journey is nothing more than a long loop north and then south to an otherwise-inaccessible section of Lower Karegh-Konan.

Head west through the door, descend ten short flights of stairs and open the gate. You'll find yourself in a large, high-ceilinged cave with floors from the Troll Caves and walls courtesy of Vanguard Keep. Exit to the north (the gate to the northwest is locked) and kill the two Satyrs—a tougher version of the Ravener from the Vanguard Keep Halls.

Get the treasure and continue north, up a rise, and follow the corridor as it loops around to the southwest. Throw the switch at the end of the corridor and return to the chamber at the base of the stairs.

Oops. Now you have company. The switch you threw opened the locked gate in this room. It also released a trio of Steel Steam Golems from alcoves in the south wall. Kill them—remember, electricity plays havoc with these machines—and get the plate mail boots and Poison Dart scroll from the alcoves.

Use the newly-opened gate and follow the passage northwest. Get the Healing potion in the room to the northwest—you could use a good heal or two by now—and the plate chest armor and Major Heal potion from a sloping passage to the east.

At the northern end of this defile, you'll find a passage bearing west. Follow it to a large room. You will quickly attract the attention of three Satyrs. The odds will improve markedly if you lure them forward into the narrow east-west passage, where these bulky creatures may get bogged down trying to squeeze through the gap, and you can shoot them with ranged weapons.

Now things start to get really interesting. Off to the west, you'll see a murky pool. You couldn't enter the river back in Skelon's Gorge because it was deep and fast-moving. This drain, on the other hand, is no more than neck-deep and doesn't seem to be moving at all.

You should note that there's nothing here you're likely to actually want. The east branch has some inferior armor and the western, a very bloody grate. But it's an interesting example of *Thunderscape* trying on something a little different.

Back in the large room, you may also see some fireballs flying overhead. Look up and you'll see a series of catwalks and platforms. More golem action. You can't get up there now, but you will be able to later in this section of the game.







Immediately to the south are a series of small rooms. The ones to the west hold only a potion, but one farther east holds a reasonable simulation of a healing pool. Or is it? Note the description of the water ("murky") and pass it up. The water is stagnant, and if the party drinks, it will take damage.

Leave the pool room to the southwest and climb the rise. You'll see a short drop-off to the south. Kill the three Satyrs you'll find here. (You'll probably have to take this bunch on in hand-to-hand combat.)

Get the Healing potion from the room to the west, open the gate to the southeast and climb the long flight of stairs to a chamber much like to one through which you entered the Founder's Caves. There's a Medium Shield here, and the exit back to Lower Karegh-Konan lies to the south. As always in these levels, you'll leave with a sense of tasks undone. Just think of them as tasks you haven't quite gotten around to yet.



## Lower Karegh-Konan, Part II

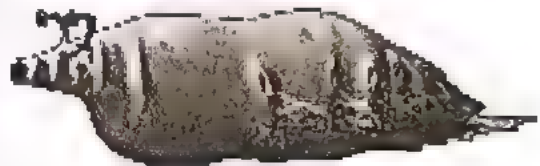
You'll return to Lower Karegh-Konan at a location just west of where you left it. A curving path south and west will take you directly back to Karegh-Konan proper. Once out in the main corridor, you can get to the gates without a single fight.

However, if you choose that route, you'll miss out on some pleasant surprises. This section of the lower city is even livelier than the area to the south.

Either way, you'll have to pass through the city's famous Mushroom Gardens first. Untended, they have been given over to decay and corruption and that can mean only one thing: a visit from our friend, The Giant Maggot. Kill off all four maggots here, and check out the rooms to the southeast for a decent treasure

(around 800 GP), and the tool shed west for a scythe and a pair of picks. (A pick will come in handy in the not-too-distant future.) Use the gate to the south.

Those of you heading straight back to Karegh-Konan, just keep on keeping on and don't leave the main hallway. Those staying ... let's find some fun.



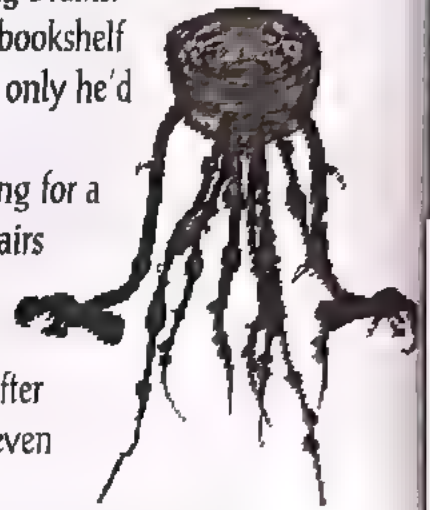
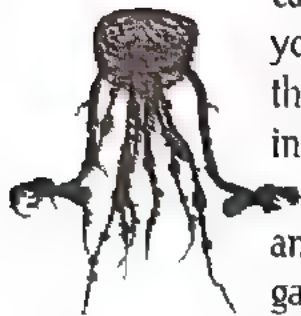


The first couple of rooms hold only Dark Dwarves. The third, with the sign, Khar-aahn, Sage, is home to three Floating Brains. Once they're not floating any more, check out the bookshelf for an interesting passage: "... he almost made it. If only he'd run faster ..."

Climb the stairs to the east only if you're itching for a fight and have a full load of mana. One of the upstairs rooms holds around six Floating Brains. Hit them early with Lightning Bolt spells at high mana, and you may not have to hit them again. The killer is, after this murderous combat, you don't get a thing. Not even information.

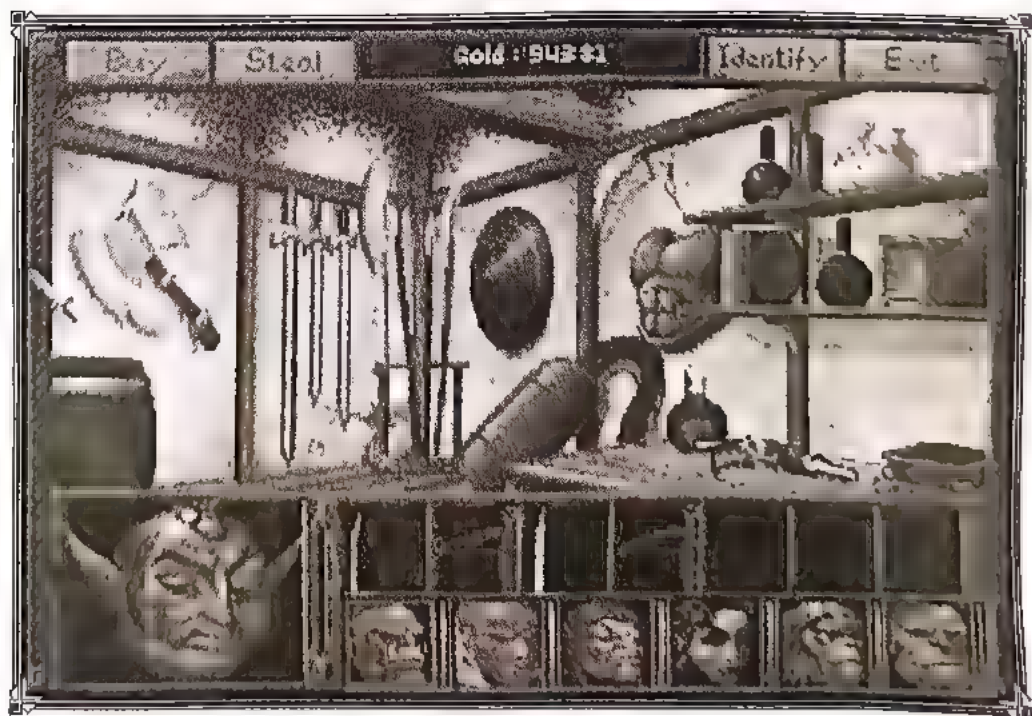
Things like this suggest there's nothing to be had in the lower city, and will tend to make you join the crowd heading for the exit. That's game-designer trickery. For just to the west and across the hall, your patience will be rewarded. Fight your way through the Dark Dwarves, climb the stairs, and bear east. Fight off more dwarves and enter the door to the east.

Finally, another shop (Figure 7-11)! It's run by a green-faced Goreaux named Gnaw, and he's probably not the sort of fellow you'd do business with if RPG life was real life. He sounds a little like Daffy Duck; he talks a lot, compared to Finea, but says little, and his address has a just *slightly* derisive tone—a reminder you are still behind enemy lines.



**Figure 7-11.**

I find your purchase  
... fascinating.





However, a shop is a shop, and this is the only one around since Finea bugged out. So endure his lispy spiel and his snicker, and do some business.

- ◆ Your first step should be to sell off unneeded items to clear out your inventory. Any armor of less than plate level should go in the sell pile, as should most unenchanted and unnamed weapons. When you leave, you will be grotesquely rich.
- ◆ You probably won't be buying much here. Gnaw's selling plain plate armor when you're putting your party into mithril; he doesn't have any shields at all, and the shop's stock of ranged and pole-arm weapons is barely an improvement over the stuff you saw at Finea's back in Skelon's Gorge. (However, do check out the scrolls.)
- ◆ Don't feel you have to do everything this moment. While Finea's may have seemed like a finicky antique store, open only when it wanted to be, Gnaw's seems to be the 7-Eleven of weapons shops. You can always come back later. (Indeed, if you're low on cash, you can round up all the lower-grade weapons lying around and sell them here. Then again, if you're short of cash at this stage, you're doing something wrong.)

This convenience-store approach allows you to tailor your purchases to specific situations—like the one just to the west and north. You're in for a pair of terrific battles when you enter the Housestead of Clan Thalla-Ghare. Downstairs, you'll face a quartet of upper-level Dwarves and, upstairs, a packed room of Floating Brains and a dwarf called Dark Thane (Figure 7-12).

Two spellcasters and a predictable number of potent combat-spell items in inventory just isn't enough to cope with this crowd. You need Lightning Bolt scrolls, and Gnaw's got 'em in stock. Make it two scrolls per party member, and then hoof it up the stairs and start using them the moment you go into combat.

Be sure to grab Thane's Executioner's Axe afterward. This weapon adds 30 points to the user's Axe/mace skill, and also improves the odds of the user scoring a critical hit.



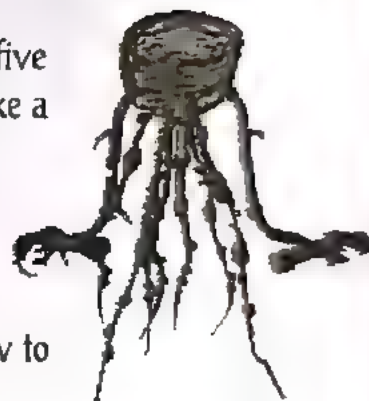




**Figure 7-12.**  
A Nocturnal think-tank



Now, don't go getting cocky. You have to kill off five more Brains in the room to the south before you can take a breather and pick over all the loot. However, the chest you'll find afterward holds 5,000 GP and the flail is Shatter Storm, which not only adds 30 to the user's Axe/mace skill, but gives him extra attacks. (With that in mind, try this weapon out with Bert, who's slow to build those extra weapon swings.)

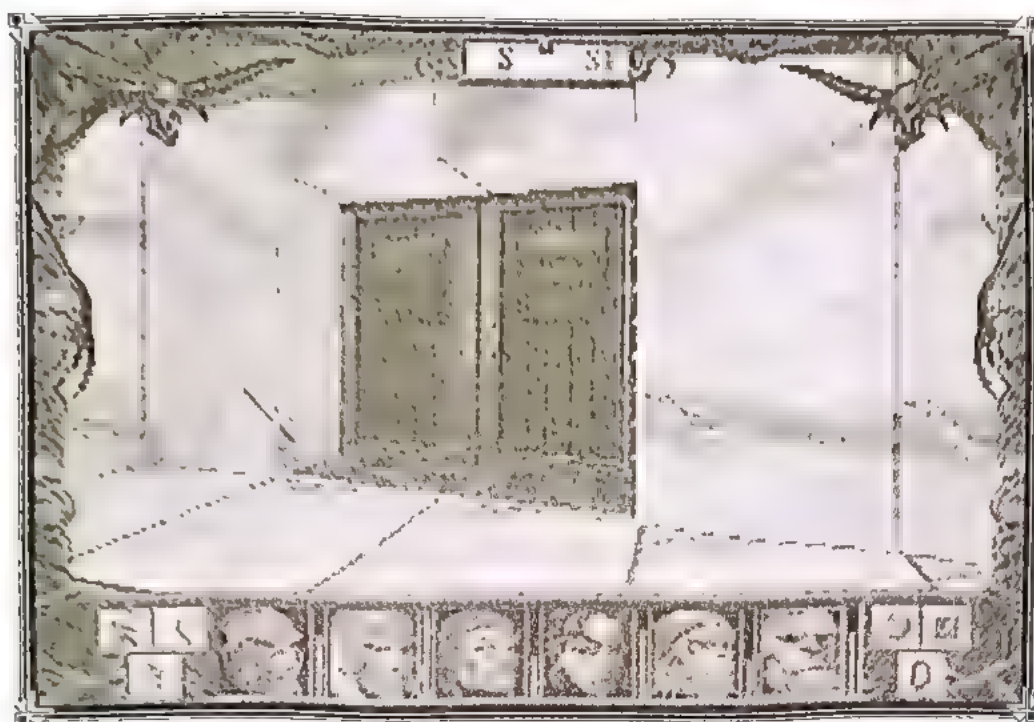


There's not much left to do now before we return to Karegh-Konan. You'll find an intriguing reference in the bookshelf at House Haghraa on the north side of the corridor. ("... and the child that took his friend's hammer was dragged away by the evil ones, across the lowest sea.")

And the room up the stairs around back merits a look, if only because you're facing a new monster. Here you'll have to knock off a Dark Shaman—a spellcasting Dark Dwarf with 350 HP—to reach a pair of double doors.

Double doors (Figure 7-13) almost always mean good stuff in store somewhere down the road, and two sets of double doors, which is what we have here, is a pretty sure sign you're entering someplace important. The squad of Dark Dwarves behind the second set of doors would seem to confirm that.





**Figure 7-13.**

Today on Geraldo: double doors and treasure in character role-playing games. Is there a link?

Uh-uh. After all this, you just find a Broad Sword and a Morning Star. Well, at least Karegh-Konan is consistent: The main thing you gain here is ground. And speaking of ground, the exit back to Karegh-Konan is just to the west now. You've just got one more hurdle to jump over, and then you can move on to the caves.

Or not. As you'll see, you'll have a couple of options.

## Karegh-Konan, Part II

You'll arrive back in the city in the middle of a small complex of rooms, a short distance north of the gates where you left it. Bear northwest, and follow the main corridor. (The southern rooms hold only a chest, and the west, while they give access to a substantial second floor, draw you into a rash of tedious fights with Dark Dwarves, with antique weapons as your reward.)

There's only one bit of trickery here. Listen to the machinery you set off when you open the door at 47,40,1052. You're also releasing three Dark Dwarves into the room behind you at 55,45,1052. You'll want to backtrack and kill them so you don't get boxed in during the battle to come.

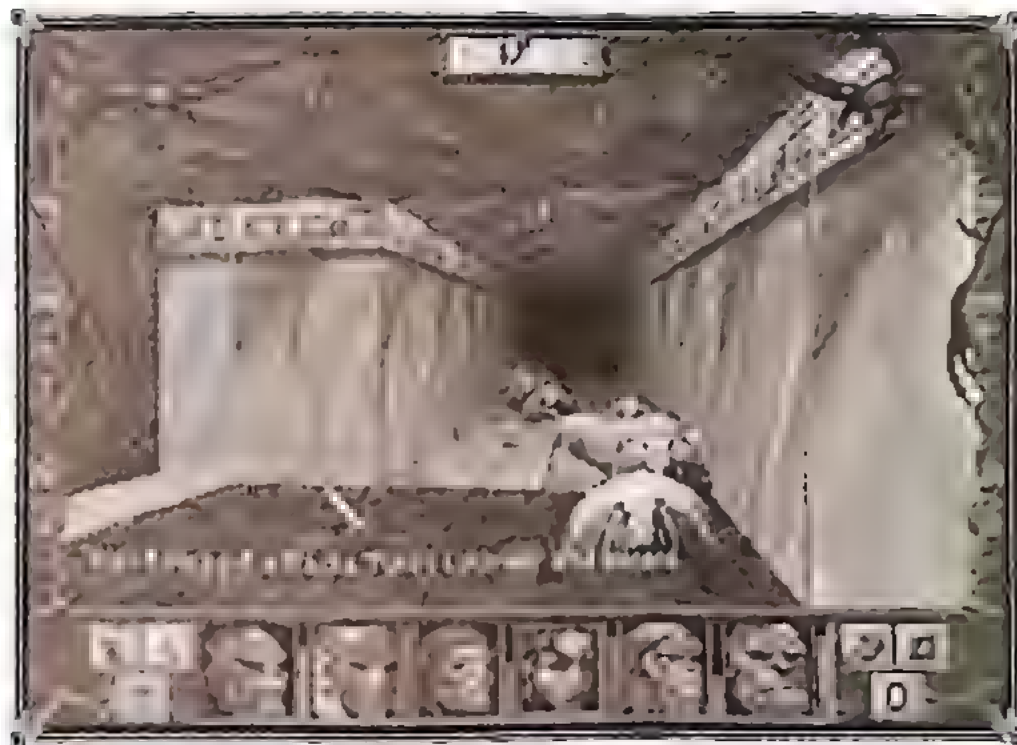




In your move northwest, you'll eventually come to set of double doors. Open them and wait a bit. You'll soon find yourself in battle with around ten Giant Maggots (Figure 7-14). Once they're gone, the Lord of Worms (Figure 7-15) can't be far behind.



**Figure 7-14.**  
Rotting maggots of death



**Figure 7-15.**  
The Lord of the Worms. (He's engaged to the Lord of the Flies.)







## The Lord of Worms

This red-skinned relative of the Smoke Demon is the Nocturnal "boss" of Karegh-Konan. He's fearsome to look at, with a big, confident stride and 600 HP. But he's relatively easy to kill. Like the Smoke Demons back in Vanguard Keep, he has a low resistance to electricity, and a high-mana Lightning Bolt spell will bring him to his knees. Then you can just cut off his knees.



Once the Lord is dead, you'll receive a report of a scream from a corrupted column in the throne room. (That may take you by surprise, as, depending on where the battle takes place, you may not even have seen the column yet.)

Before you check that out, you've got to take care of the Lord's followers. Follow the passage around to the east and enter the throne room. Giant Maggots will appear. Lots of Giant Maggots. We're probably talking 20, anyway, and you'll have to clear them all out.

You can make this process short and sweet by using the party as a maggot-magnet. Enter the room, stand in an open, central location, and let them engage you. Use the ability to pivot in a circle while in combat and wait until you've got as many maggots around you as possible before you start entering combat decisions. Then unleash a Lightning Bolt which will hit all your enemies. Repeat as necessary.



When that's finished, you can have a look at the black throne and the gates to the north and south, and grab the Fireball scroll from the southeast corner and the Magical Glaive from behind the corrupted pillar.



Don't click on the pillar itself just yet; that will force a decision you may not be ready to make. In fact, save your game before you do anything else. You have a little thinking to do.

## Decision Time

It probably sounds as if we're just about done here. That depends on your disposition. You can open the north gates, kill the additional Giant Maggots here, take the left-hand passage, and proceed northwest directly to the Final Gates, which lead out of Karegh-Konan and into the Lower Caves. This allows you to get on with the game directly, and ensures you'll have a city to come back to.

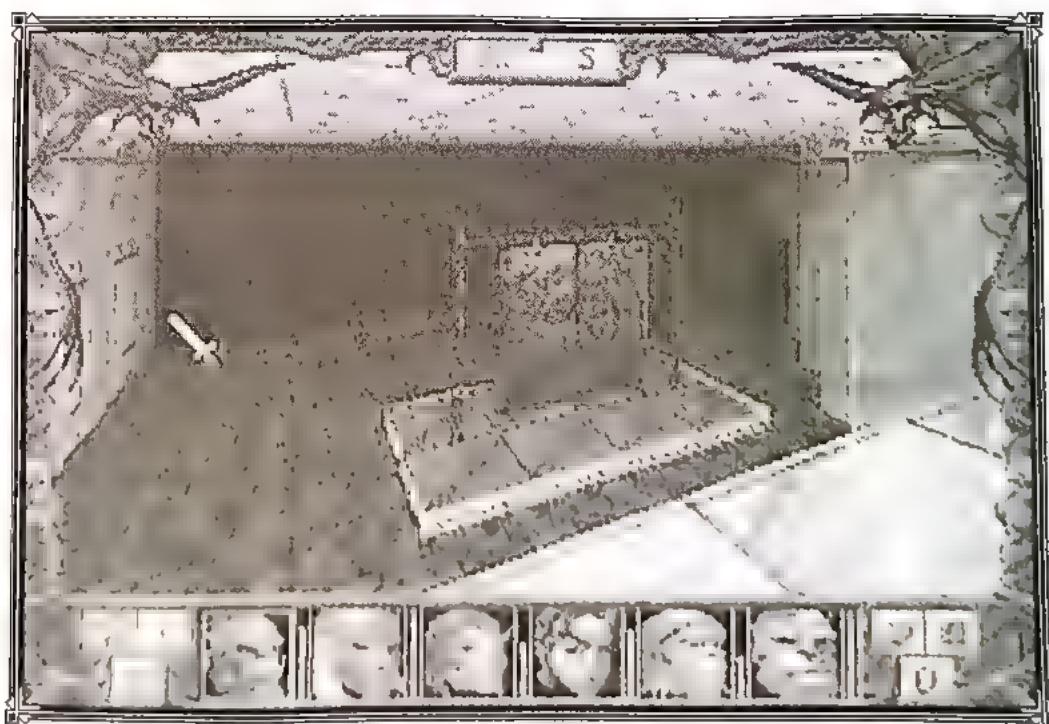




But, frankly, there's a lot to these three linked levels that you haven't seen yet, and some of the stuff you'll find is pretty neat. For instance, even if you're just bound for the Final Gates, there are two side roads you can explore.

- ◆ Did you know that Karegh-Konan has an underground river on its lowest level! On your way to the Final Gates, look for an elevator off to the west. It goes down a considerable distance and deposits you on the south side of a green stream. There's nothing here—just a zip gun in a recess to the west—but the water flows wickedly fast and you'll have some fun letting it drag you from the east end to the rusted-shut gate to the west. (There's more to it than this, as you'll see later.)
- ◆ Farther west, you can climb stairs to the south, collect some decent armor, and peer down into the city foyer from the northern balcony (Figure 7-16)—which was inaccessible when you first entered Karegh-Konan. If you want to revisit any areas you skipped earlier, you can jump down from here and do it. Don't worry about monsters regenerating. If you were thorough in your slaughter the first time through, the halls will still be empty now.

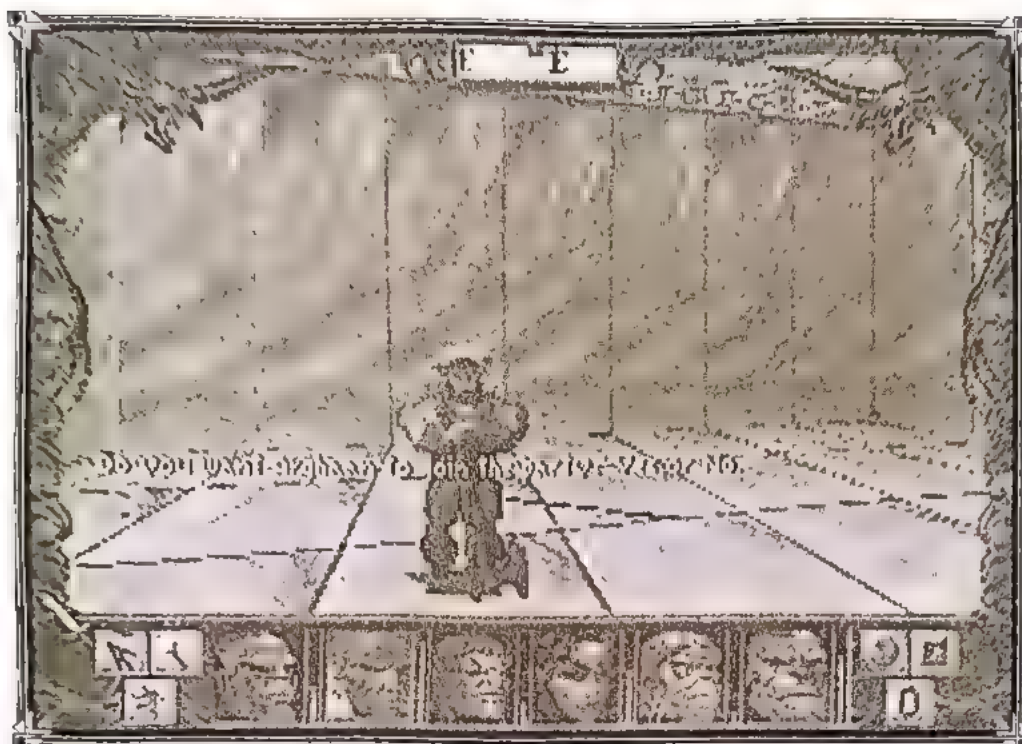
**Figure 7-16.**  
"The Gong Show"





## Arghaan

However, that's all you can do for now without a major commitment of resources and time. Get back to the throne room and click on the corrupted black pillar. You'll free a captain of pre-Nocturnal Karegh-Konan—a self-righteous dwarf named Arghaan—and he'll agree to join your band (Figure 7-17).



**Figure 7-17.**

Unfortunately, you can't bargain with Arghaan.

It's a more complicated decision than most of this type. Arghaan is a more than capable Level 20 fighter, with an Axe/mace skill of 350, 289 HP, mithril chain armor, and a Great Axe that he can use up to three times per combat round. Unlike other non-player characters, he actually has an inventory (Figure 7-18). (Well, a hand cannon. Arghaan's firearm skill is a respectable 110.)

However, if you accept him into your little band, you'll have to drop a character from the party. The most likely candidate for replacement is slow-witted Bert, and if you've got a sentimental bone in your body, that won't be easy. He's been with you almost since the beginning, and by now, you've probably developed an attachment to the big lug and the crushing blows he deals out.



**Figure 7-18.**

Arghaan specs out pretty nicely, doesn't he!



Moreover, you'll have to grant Arghaan a boon and undertake a quest to find the Founder's Stone—the first stone carved specifically for use in Karegh-Konan. And *have to* is just the phrase: If you proceed to the Final Gates without finding the stone, Arghaan will refuse to leave the city. If you leave anyway, he'll quit the party, and you'll have sacrificed Bert for nothing. So don't take this decision lightly.

Of course, you can simply use Arghaan for information and go and perform the quest anyway. But let's be practical. Properly armed, the dwarf's better than Bert.

Bert's a good fellow about it, though. He tells you an affectionate good-bye ("I 'member you all time") and even leaves behind his beloved club.

You could cry, y'know!

Two major areas remain unexplored: the northwest section of the lower city and the whole western half of the Founder's Cave. As you'd expect, the Founder's Cave holds the entrance to Konan's tomb. However, we'll tackle the last bit of the lower city first. Let's just say that removal of the Founder's Stone might have some unforeseen consequences for all three linked levels.

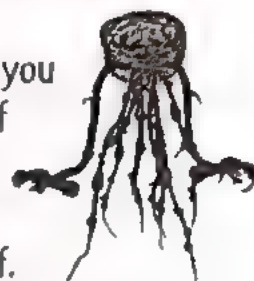


## Lower Karegh-Konan, Part III

You'll get to Lower Karegh-Konan by using the corridor in the south-east corner of the throne room. It's a *strange* place—a hodgepodge of a traditional house-to-house combat, bizarre architecture, and a diabolical, platform-hopping puzzle. But, that said, it's definitely worth a visit. It's like nowhere else in the game.

You can take or leave the rooms on the southern perimeter. They're all guarded by Dark Dwarves, and none contain anything of consequence, save the one to the southwest marked *The Residence of Vhagh Marghal*, where you'll find one of the walls out of alignment. (It's a secret door that can't be opened from this side.)

However, do visit the library to the east. Not only will you find a Whirlwind Spellbook, but also a couple of mentions of Konan's armor and cryptic references to the Founder's Stone.



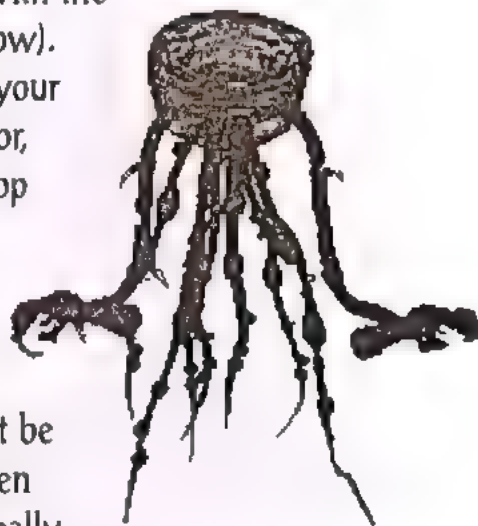
There are two main tasks here. The first is to clear out the many Floating Brains to permit the party to reach the roof. (That strange music you hear—as though someone had hit all the left-hand piano keys at the same time—is their theme song.)

You know the drill. It should be a little easier with the Raise Dead spell (which the party should have by now).

The Brains can be reached through the doorway on your right after you leave the library. Clear the second floor, then climb to the third, step out into the open air, drop down the stairs to the west, and hit the switch at 27,7,1177. Head back up the stairs and launch a running jump to the rooftops across the alley to the south. Bear west and drop down onto the bridge.

The rest of this quest should come naturally. Just be systematic, and allow yourself time to recover between the battles. And enjoy the view. This little place is really pretty wild.

Then there's the matter of reaching the equipment on a high platform just north of the exit back to the throne room. This can be done, with practice, from the crates to the north, and, with considerable difficulty, from the rooftop to the south. Get the Banish scroll, the Needler pistol and the full suit of mithril plate. Jump down, and take the western exit back to the throne room.







## The Founder's Cave, Part II

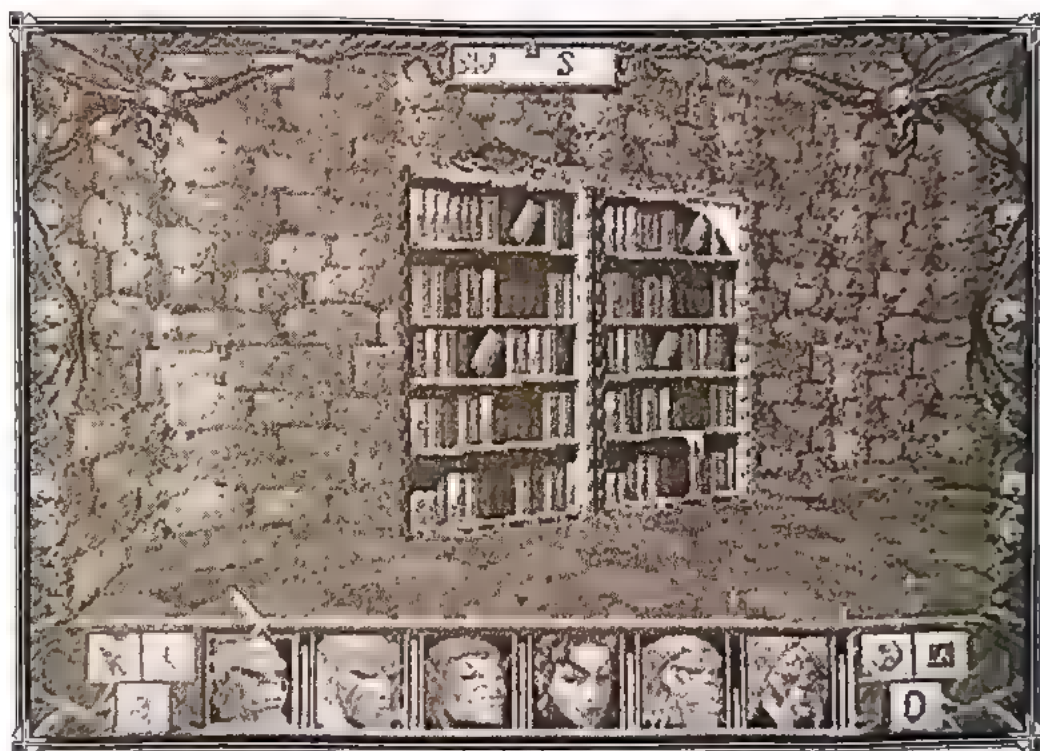
Just one more stop! Enter the north gate and use the right-hand passage. Open the double doors, and you'll find yourself in a huge, wide-open room on the caves' upper level and in hot and heavy combat with Dark Dwarves. The farther east you go, the tougher they'll get. Kill off everyone in this enclosure, and you'll be at liberty to check out the doors that open in several directions.

Your first stop should be the double doors immediately to the right as you enter. Enter this room and use the door to the east. You'll find a chest with 1,000 GP; an invoice for ten Steel Steam Golems (in the bookcase) with an unnerving reference to modifications; and, atop the left-hand shelf, a book called *Hidden Paths* (Figure 7-19). This will increase a character's See Secrets skill by 50 points.



**Figure 7-19.**

What a strange place for a book!



Both gates to the east are locked, but not the one just north of where you entered. Kill the Dark Dwarves inside and check out the ravine. Throw the switch on the wall to open the larger of the two eastern gates back in the main room, and then jump to the northeast, over the trench, and once again to the northwest. You'll find a secret door to the east about halfway up this dead-end passage.

Inside this room, take Olmar's Ring (which gives protection against electricity), the Acid Arrow scroll, and the chest. (If you blow the jump, you'll land in water and be swept all the way to the gate at the southern





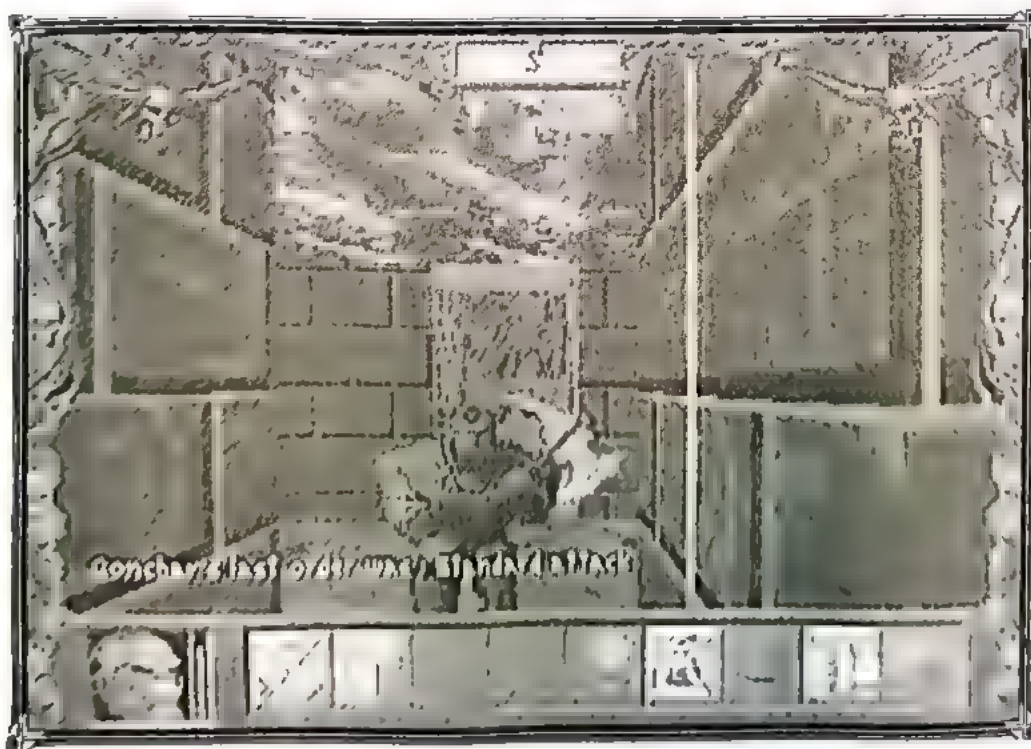
end of the river under Karegh-Konan. So that elevator you found in Karegh-Konan earlier is essentially an escape route!)

Head back to the main room and enter the now-open eastern gate. You'll find yourself in a cavern with another platform off to the south. Get the Magical Battle Mace and Magical Barrier scroll from the side rooms and jump the gap. (If you fall, you'll find yourself in the Satyr pit through which you passed just before leaving the Founder's Caves on your last visit.)

Follow the passage until you receive a report of a secret door to the south. Open it and get a Magic Light Crossbow and the Ring of Agility, which raises a character's Dexterity stat by one point. At the end of the passage, throw the switch on the wall, and return to the main chamber the way you came.

### ***Dark Dwarf Warrens, Here We Come! Or Not***

You're ready to wrap things up. However, there's one more interesting (and optional) side trip. Pay a visit to the square structure at the north end of the room. Kill its Dark Warrior defender, stand on the platform in the room's northeast corner and throw the switch on the wall. Once again, move all the way onto the platform first, or it may prove a rough ride. You'll descend into what appears to be a prison. Most of the cells are empty—a couple hold Satyrs—but the westernmost cell in the south wall holds three Dark Dwarves and the entrance to a tunnel that climbs steeply away to the south (Figure 7-20).



**Figure 7-20.**  
Here's where the  
Nocturnals broke  
into Karegh-Konan.



You've discovered the Nocturnals' secret passage into Karegh-Konan! This self-contained maze is large, multi-leveled, and confusing. It's also very heavily defended by Dark Dwarves, Dark Warriors, and a Dark Shaman and is valuable more for the experience points gained from killing them than for useful items. The best items to be had are the Wand of Ashes (which casts the Fireball spell) at 10,54,752 and the Magical Shortsword at 32, 52, 902.



This maze also has one real sticking point. If you manage to penetrate to the far southeast corner, you'll find a steep descending passage blocked by a magical barrier. Click on the barrier, and you'll learn that this passage supposedly descends to the Dark Dwarf Warrens.

Don't kill yourself trying to nullify or get around this barrier. There's no such region as the Warrens in the game, and SSI reports that, while you can see the passage continuing beyond the obstacle, this thin blue line of magic marks the impassable southern edge of the Founder's Cave.

## The Big Finish

Now you've really done everything you can do. If you have any left-over business with Gnaw, head back to Lower Karegh-Konan and take care of it now. You won't be able to after this next step. Then re-enter the main chamber in the Founder's Cave and use the northern of the two gates in the east wall. The funereal walls tell the story. You have found the entrance to Konan's tomb.

But not Konan. That will take a little more doing. Enter the cavern beyond. Ahead lies a catwalk. You've seen that catwalk before. (You looked up at it on our first passage through the cave. This is where the fireballs came from.) It leads to a locked gate and a deep crevasse. Uh-oh. Did we miss something?

No. The hidden switch that unlocks the gate and bridges the gap is close by. Walk to the west edge of the platform and turn south. Jump across the gap to a small platform. You'll find a gap in the west wall. Click on the wall, and it will open to reveal a switch. Pull the switch, and the gate will open and bridges will appear across the gaps.

A little too easy, if you ask me. Ever wonder where those ten modified Steel Golems were going to come into play? Right about now. As soon as you step on the catwalk, three of them open up on you from across the chasm to your left. How you're supposed to fight them across a chasm with swords and axes, I'm sure I don't know. But you do fight them, and

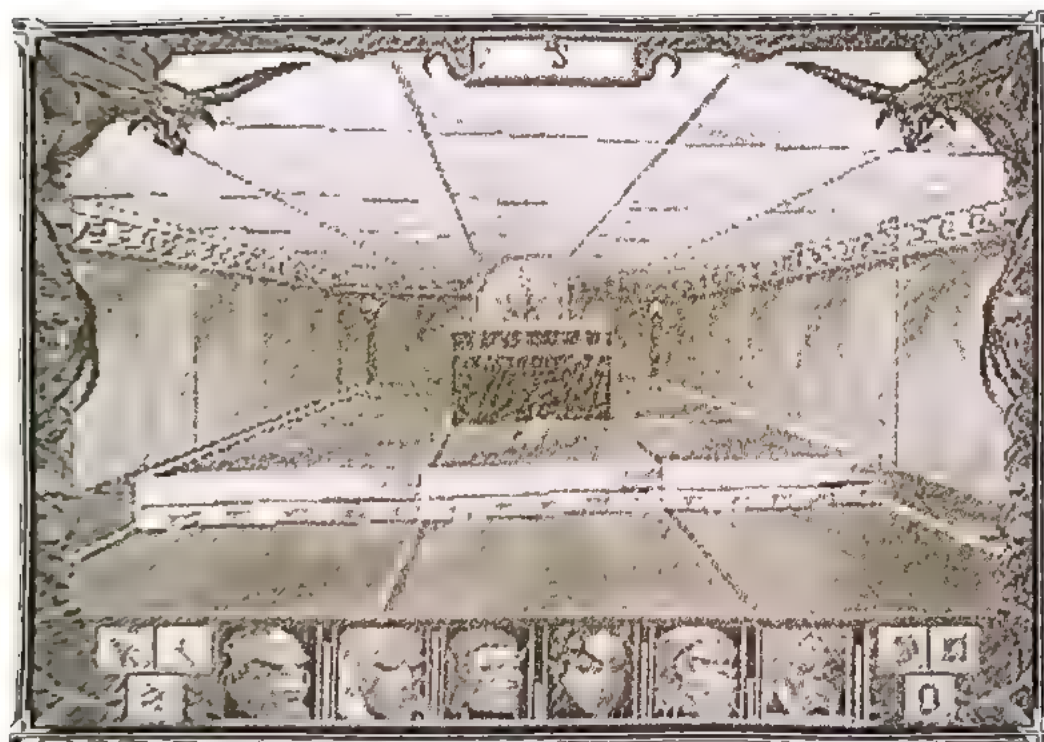




once they're done for, you can continue through the gate and across the bridge. (Careful here: The lava-bottomed chasms on each side are inescapable.)

Hmmm. The bridge behind you seems to be receding into the ceiling. Hmmm. Alcoves are opening up on both sides of the party, revealing more Steel Steam Golems. And there's no tomb in sight. The only thing up ahead is that Manite chain chest armor and a white platform. Hmmmmmm!

If you think you can handle five or six of the golems, take the time and get the Manite armor. It's superb. If not, make for the platform fast. This must be where that hint about running fast kicks in. With luck, you'll only have to fight a couple of golems on the way. The platform is a teleport, and it will zap you into Konan's tomb—a sealed-off chamber back in Karegh-Konan (Figure 7-21).



**Figure 7-21.**

The tomb of Konan, the non-barbarian

## RIP Konan

Walk right up to the sarcophagus. Take the Banish scroll, Drythen's Shield, the Magical Short Sword, and the three Healing potions. Click on the sarcophagus, and take Konan's armor and the Founder's Stone. (Don't worry, it's OK to take the armor.) The stone will crumble in your hands. (Again, don't worry, that's supposed to happen.) After Arghaan has said his piece, and the sarcophagus recedes into the floor, exit through the opening that will appear beyond the teleport pad to the north.

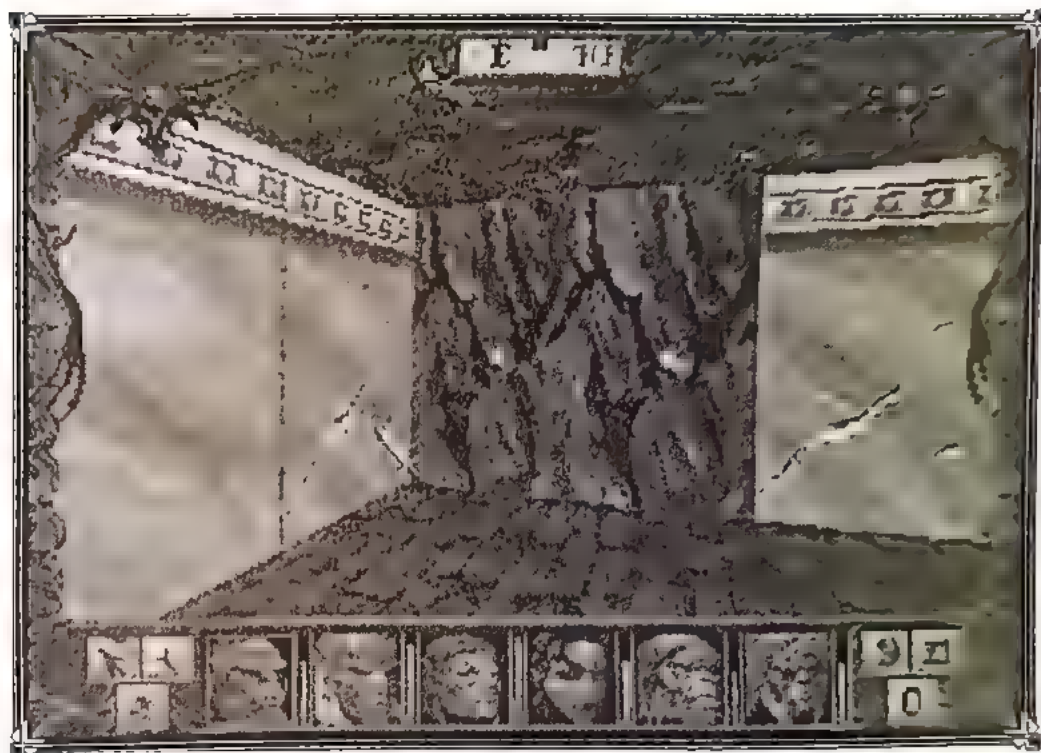




Now, I hope you didn't have any business left over in any part of the city because now, well ... you can't get there from here. The parting of the founder's stone from the founder brings on the final cataclysm and all of Karegh-Konan is buried deep under stone (Figure 7-22). It's as though a mountain had landed on it. Only the elevator to the underground river and the path to the Final Gates remains open.

**Figure 7-22.**

You're going nowhere fast in Karegh-Konan once you take the Founder's Stone.



However, you *can* still get back to the mines. Head west to the Final Gates. You'll see that a passage has opened up in the west wall just south of the door. This long and suffocating tube takes you—mostly on your hands and knees—back to that spot just inside the Karegh-Konan foyer where you felt a breeze. (The breeze came from this tunnel.) There's no need to use it now—it contains nada—but it's there if you need to revisit the mines. (You *did* take the Lockless Key, right?)

As for Karegh-Konan, ah, well, it's lost both to you and the Dwarves, but also to the Nocturnals. You've turned a very long and complicated corner in your trip to the Radiant Citadel. The mouth to the Citadel Caves lies ahead. Chin up, swords out. Let's get on with it.



## The Citadel Caves

*The party opens doors without turning a knob and creates some new ones, rides a wild river, finds a surprise, and clears a path to the Catacombs.*

The spirit of Karegh-Konan is not entirely gone from *Thunderscape*. The entryway to the Citadel Caves, just outside the Final Gates, was clearly designed by the dwarves in the style of their fair city. And the caverns beyond, while often ruined by cave-ins, show the same deft hand. It will make you think back fondly to the time you spent in that great dark city.

But let's look forward. To enter the Citadel Caves, you'll need to solve a riddle. It's very simple: You're asked to identify what's passing in the mural to the south.

Well, let's see. One scene is set during the day. The other is at night. So the only thing passing is ... anyone! ... time! Just type it in. The doors will slide open and you'll meet up with something you probably thought you'd finished with.



Oh, no. *NOT* the MANTIS.

Yes, the Mantis. Cover your ears, hack away, and be prepared to spend some time at it. Much of this western section of the Lower Caves is inhabited by two new breeds of this green shrieker, and you may have a dozen or more combats in the area around the entry door before you feel secure.

However, Mantises in general are still flimsy creatures, and they come apart like dry kindling. And after Karegh-Konan, most of the Lower Caves will seem blissfully simple. Basically, you just have to survive the depredations of three different critters (Mantises, Dragonets, and Cave Rats) long enough to get through five doors—none of which exactly opens on its own. The fifth door will take you into the Upper Caves, a *much* tougher level.



But simplicity doesn't mean you can take it easy here, and you'll want to set out right away. Don't go treasure hunting. There's no real treasure to find. Don't even loiter in one spot for too long. The monsters—Wild and Worker Mantises and Cave Rats—generate with incredible speed and at times you'll find them actually *lining up* to do battle with you.



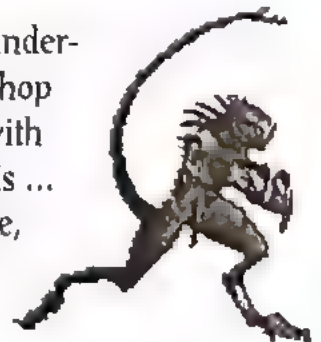
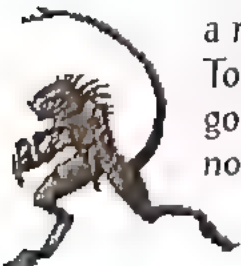
### Door No. 1

You start out in the southwestern portion of the caves. To reach the eastern half, you'll need to learn, and implement in the correct order, a three-part set of instructions for opening the access gate to the northeast. These three parts are found on plaques distributed around the maze

If you'd like to do it yourself, the plaques are located at in the Mantis lair at 14,43,1232; in the rat warren to the east at 26,31,980; and at the gate itself at 17,1,1172.

However, if you don't feel like bothering, I'll make things simple for you. The answer is: pull, turn right, push. That is, plaque one reads, "Pull hard on the wheel;" plaque two reads, "Then, turn to the right;" and plaque three reads, "Then push, fool!"

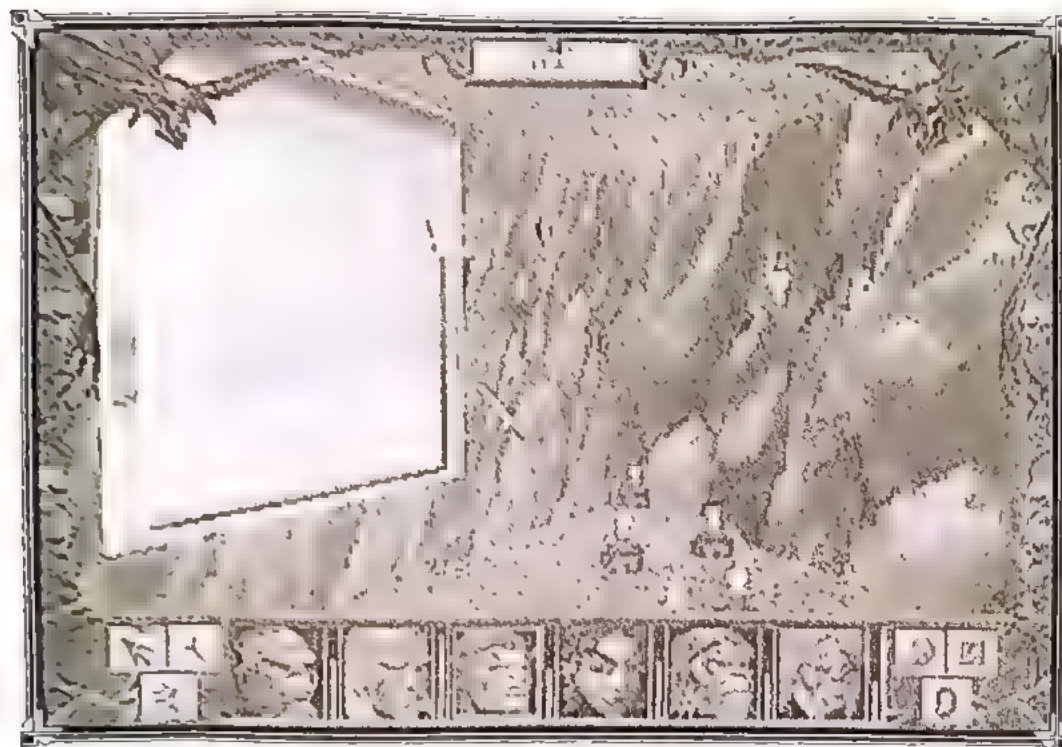
The second and third plaques are easy to find in your wanderings. However, to reach the first one, you'll literally have to chop through Mantises like an explorer cutting away underbrush with a machete: Take a step, kill a Mantis, take a step, kill a Mantis ... To reach the Mantis lair, bear northeast from the cave entrance, go northwest at the fork, and then follow this broad avenue north to the second-to-last passage on the right.





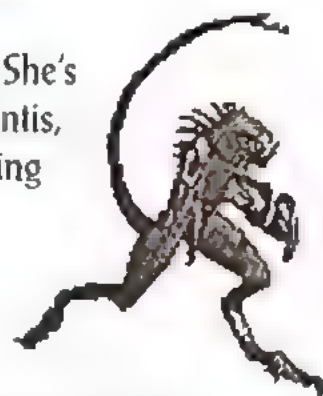


Finally, follow this narrow corridor all the way south, and explore the southern spur at the end. Next to the plaque, you'll also find three Healing potions and one of Cure Disease (Figure 8-1). (The western spur also contains a scroll and chest with 175 GP.)



**Figure 8-1.**  
Shake your booty.

You'll run into the Mantis Queen in this region as well. She's much heftier in the hit-point department than the average Mantis, but offers nothing special in combat, and in the middle of cutting up the other Mantises, you may not even realize she's there.



### Door No. 2

Once past the gate (Figure 8-2), clear the Cave Rats out of the area on the other side and stop to admire the thunderous waterfall. Nope, you can't go behind it (though you can ride the falls a little later in the game).

But you may notice something shadowy across the water to the east. Yup, it's a legitimate healing pool—unlike the one in the Founder's Cave—and it will bring the whole party up to full strength and mana. (You'll also find some potions nearby.)

You may *also* notice that the water coming off the falls moves very quickly and dips into a tunnel a short distance to the south.





**Figure 8-2.**

This gate separates the western and eastern parts of the Lower Caves.



No, it can't be. Oh, yes it can! If you don't cross the river to the pool quickly enough, or permit the land directly over the tunnel mouth to collapse under you, you'll be swept under and resurface first in the river below the Founder's Caves and finally under Karegh-Konan.

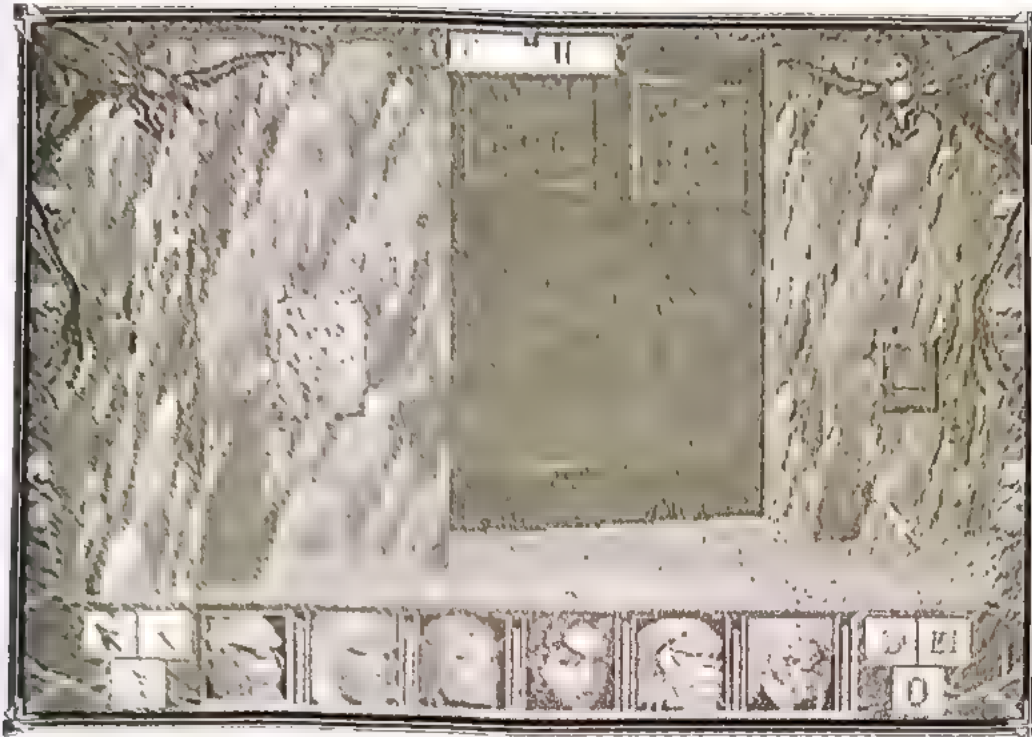
This is purely a diversion; there's nothing you have to do or find down there. However, considering how many Mantises you probably had to fight to get here, it's a *costly* diversion, so save your game before you start across.

Make your way south to the large and ominous door. "Ominous" is right: When you open it, the whole party takes a terrific jolt. It is magically electrified—presumably to keep rogue Cave Rats and Mantises away—and can be operated only by a switch on the south side (Figure 8-3).

There's another nasty trick at work here. Cave Rats congregating on the south side of the door will physically prevent you from passing through before you fight them. The door won't close once combat is underway, but it will the moment you kill the last rat, stranding you on the north side and forcing the party to get shock treatment again to pass through. To avoid this, keep a finger on the "8" key on the keypad while fighting the final rat, and you'll squeeze forward, past the door, at the last second.







**Figure 8-3.**

Opening this door from the other side will prove a shocking experience.

Continue south and prepare for another, more visceral shock. To the east, the land drops away into utter darkness. You can hear creatures below, but won't be able to see a thing. You won't know whether this is a sheer cliff or a slope. Before you take the plunge, get a Lightning Bolt scroll and a Healing potion and pick (if you didn't take one back in the Mushroom Garden) from the spur corridor to the west.

Whew. It's a slope—a steep one—and you will likely hit a patch of gravel on the way down, stumble, and take a little damage. If none of the inhabitants of this cavern took notice of you, you can explore this moon-scape a bit. Follow the south wall—taking the Healing potion from an alcove—and move slowly and quietly to the southeast corner.



### **Doors No. 3 and No. 4**

In the southeast corner, you'll find a handful of winged gray creatures passing the time of day. They seem oblivious to your presence. Far above them, the party can see a circle of light. This is evidently where the creatures leave the cave to hunt. You don't know how many are out right now, but the implication is clear: If this alcove could be closed off, your conquest of this little Dragonet fiefdom would be that much easier.







Unfortunately, there's a valuable book in the alcove, too, so you'll have to kill off the Dragonets first and not merely trap them. Sorry about that, chief. They may look like the flying monkeys from "The Wizard of Oz," but, in a fight, they're airborne sharks and they will eat you alive. Expect to end the battle with the party poisoned and each character as much as 40 HP poorer—more if the battle is joined by other Dragonets from the north.



Enter the alcove quickly and get *A Master Halberdier*, which increases a character's Pole Arm skill 50 points. (You can leave the armor and weapon behind.)

Did you bring the pick? Good! Check out the walls outside the enclosure (at 58,58,932 and 60, 56,932) and you'll learn that both are unstable and wouldn't require much nudging to collapse. Use the pick on both, and rubble will block off the alcove. You've spared yourself some fighting. Nevertheless, stay away from this area for the rest of your stay in this cave. One of *Thunderscape's* less pleasant "quirks" is that monsters often attack through walls.

Search the rest of the cave and kill any roaming Dragonets that didn't join the battle. Along the way, you'll find a two-handed axe, a half-dozen or so of those mossy rocks much favored by trolls and three levers. One lever is just west of the caved-in alcove, one is on the south wall of the central pillar, and the third is on the west wall at the north end of the room.

What you won't find, however, is a way out. Throw the three levers and a door will slide open silently at the north end of the room, releasing a handful of Greater Dragonets. Nasty as the Dragonets are, these are nastier. But they don't like the cold, and you can use that to your advantage. Ice Missile spells, anyone? Enter the room to the north to mop up any stragglers and finally, proceed north to the throne room.

### *The Alpha Dragonet*

Here in the throne room, you'll find the Alpha Dragonet. Potentially, this is the most savage of the bunch, but it has the same inherent weakness of all dragons. Hit it with an Ice Missile spell at high mana and you may zero out his 450 HP in one blow.





Hop up the three steps to the top of the platform and gather your loot: Fireball and Acid Arrow scrolls, Herbal remedy, two Healing potions, mithril chain leggings, mithril plate boots, Magical Glaive, Magical Battle Mace, Fang (which adds 30 points to the user's Fencing skill), and Elixir of Grace. Yow. You haven't pulled together such a good haul in one place in a long time. The only thing you'll want to leave is the Heavy Crossbow.

### Door No. 5

That still doesn't get you out of here, though. Look at the sides of the platform to find two blue buttons. Push both and two entrances will open up just to the southeast of where the Greater Dragonets made their appearance. These lead into a large Cave Rat lair—full of brief encounters and junky weapons and armor. Follow the narrow passage north, southeast, north, and then west and you'll come to ...

Well, there *should* be a door here. The automap says so, anyway. However, when you click on the center of the featureless west wall, you'll learn the door won't open.



Don't bother going back to the cavern and searching for another button or lever. As usual, a solution is at hand, and it's rather tricky.

Every good role-playing gamer knows what it's like to belly up to a wall in a fruitless search for a catch, a button, or just something slightly out of place. You click on every pixel that looks as though it doesn't belong.

But there's a thing about those non-interactive pixels. They're the same color as the wall of which they're part. In a brown-wall, they could be dark brown or light brown, but they would definitely be *brown*.

So how is it, then, that a small squarish patch in the northeast corner of this final room is medium gray? Press it. The door will open, and you'll be home free. Bear south to reach the door to the Upper Caves.

## The Upper Caves

No rest for the weary. No sooner do you enter the Upper Caves when the original Pizza Face will start throwing fireballs at you from the top of the rise (Figure 8-4). This spellcasting monster, the Fallen One, looks like a rotting corpse. Small surprise, then, that he's very vulnerable to conventional chopping and crushing weapons. Just get him before his spells get you.





**Figure 8-4.**

Fallen One, eh?  
Maybe we should  
call him the Fallen  
Pizza. Yuck.

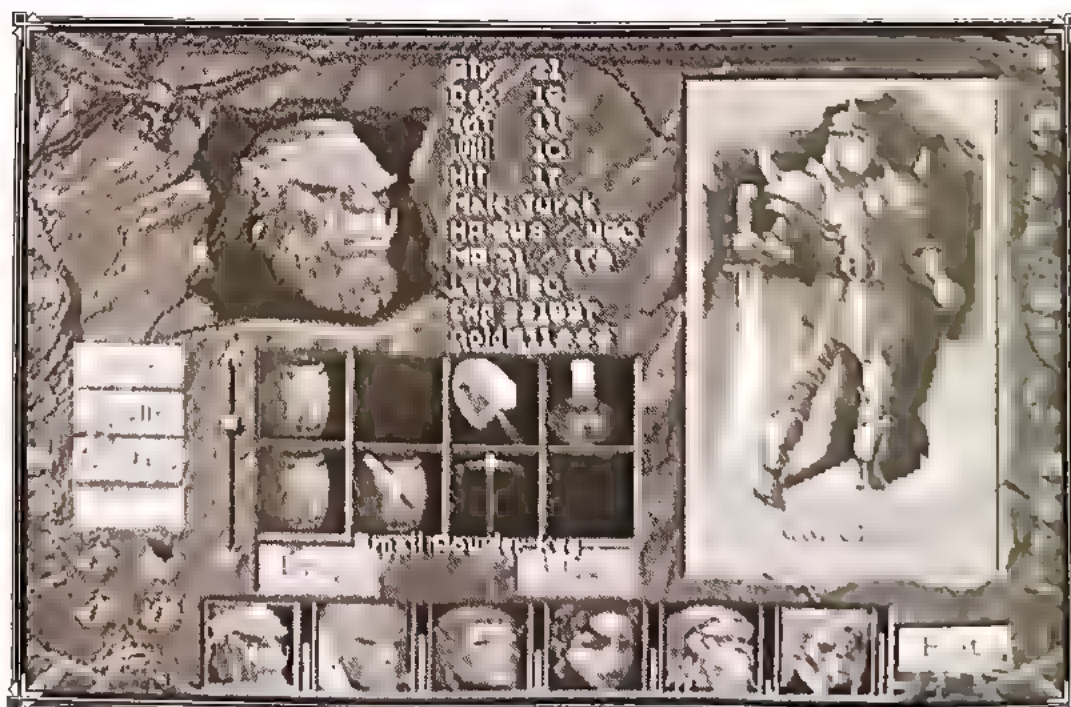


## Powder Kegs

After the Fallen One falls, have a look at the little barrels beside him (Figure 8-5). You saw one of these back in the endgame at the Golem Factory. They're powder kegs, and this time, they work. Take them.

**Figure 8-5.**

Yo, Dude. Anyone  
up for a kegger!  
Awesome.







Click one of these babies on a collapsed section of tunnel, and it clears it right out—a construction worker's version of Drain-O.

You're going to need a lot of these kegs here. Remember the map you found back in Lower Karegh-Konan? It showed recent cave-ins in Citadel Caves. As it turns out, the cave-ins are all in the Upper Caves, and picks won't do the trick.

A few suggestions for handling this new merchandise:

- ◆ Be prudent in the your use of the kegs. They are not unlimited.
- ◆ Stick to the main road. For our purposes here, any side path that doesn't at least return the kegs used to break into it isn't worth the bother.
- ◆ You don't have to blow every collapsed wall. Before you start lighting fuses, make sure there's no other way to get where you want to go and determine whether the sections you want to blow up actually block anything.
- ◆ If you run out of kegs, there is a way to find more, but you'll probably pay for them in blood. See the section titled "The Undercaves" toward the end of this chapter.
- ◆ Placement of kegs can be important. If there's any question of where precisely a keg should go, save your game beforehand and experiment with different locations.

You can use a keg right now, since the passage to the west has collapsed. When the dust clears, fight the Fallen One and Greater Dragonet that appear, head west into a dock-like area, and get the four powder kegs from the southeast corner.



## At the Bottom of the Whirlpool

The level's river ends under the docks. Have a look down at the whirlpool while you're here. If you're feeling irrational, save your game, hop into the maelstrom and skip ahead to the section called The Undercaves. Sometime irrationality produces interesting results.

(If you're not of a mind for going in circles, you can come back later. The whirlpool is not essential to completion of the level. But, to be honest, you'll probably get more out of it at this stage of the Upper Caves.)



## Thwam!

Head west, jump over the river, and use a powder keg on the caved-in wall in front of you. After the explosion, continue west to the next cave-in site, and repeat this procedure until you reach a room with a cave-in in the north wall. Use a keg on this wall and head north. Kill the Basilisk (Figure 8-6)—a pumped-up version of the Rock Lizard from the Troll Caves—and then bear east, past the skeleton and over the rise, to get the three kegs here.



**Figure 8-6.**  
The Basilisk stands  
its ground.



Make your way back to the west the way you came and use a keg on the caved-in west wall. Kill the Basilisk and Greater Dragonet (possibly two) you'll find here. The axe across the river is useless and the building entrance (Figure 8-7) is hopelessly caved-in, so bear north and east again to a set of large stairs. Kill the Fallen One on the first step, then climb to the room at the top and kill any others you find. (Don't dawdle here, Fallen Ones seem to like this spot.)

You'll find several caved-in walls here. Head straight north, up the slope, and use a keg on the next wall. After the explosion, continue north, then loop back south to find two more kegs.





**Figure 8-7.**  
The map was right.  
Cave-ins everywhere!



**Figure 8-8.**  
This blocked pas-  
sage can be cleared  
with a powder keg.

Also use a keg on the wall farther east in the main chamber (Figure 8-8). You'll open up a broad ascending chute to the north (Figure 8-9). Don't bother with the blockage in the chute's east wall. Behind it is a small Bastisk lair that will require two kegs to open up fully, but return only one keg and a Flash scroll. That's just not a good investment.





**Figure 8-9.**  
The "chute"



At the top of the chute, kill the Basilisk and Fallen One and blow the wall. Kill the Basilisks waiting beyond it, and bear north briefly before looping east and south to find two more kegs. The region to the east and north can be explored using two more kegs, and this time you'll get two back at journey's end, along with an Enlightenment Elixir.

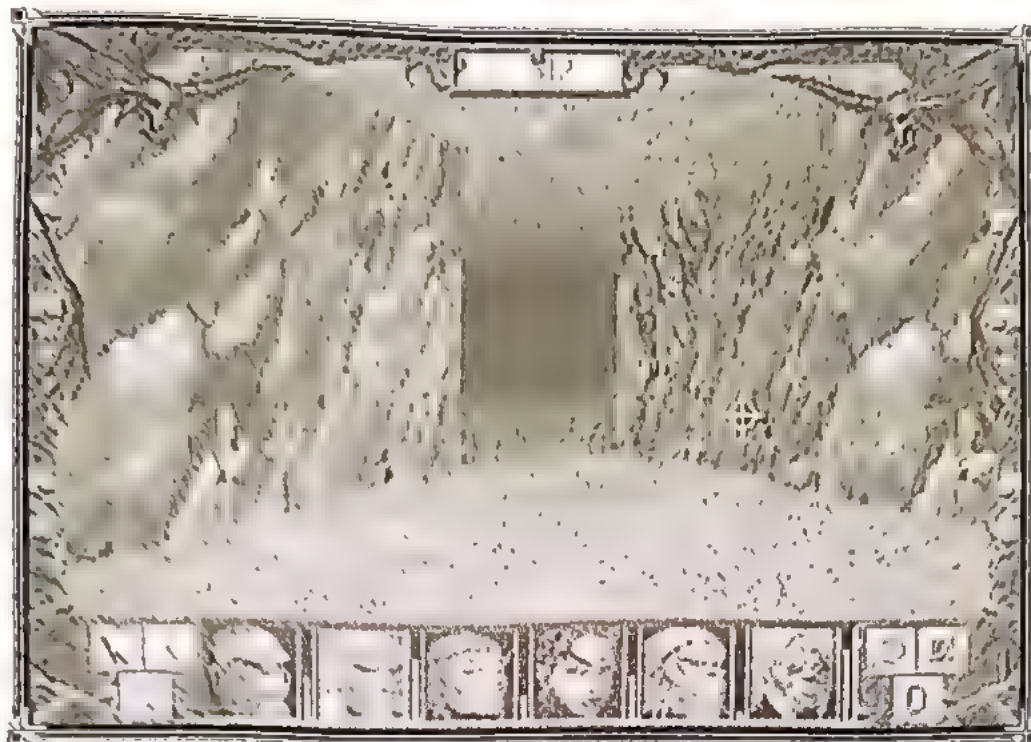


Make your way back to the top of the chute and then continue north. Blow the first wall you reach. This will let you into a hilly, pillared chamber to the east; a river-divided chamber to the west (with an alcove that requires a keg, but returns one and a scroll); and a passage leading further north.

Follow the northern passage. You'll be almost to a four-way intersection when you'll see, off to the southwest, an alcove, a ravine beyond it, and a room beyond that (Figure 8-10).

Investigate! The room will prove to have a cave-in—in its south wall. Use a keg here and kill the Fallen One inside. You'll find a Disintegrate scroll and two more kegs at the room's southern end. (Do not drop into the central pool. There are three Fallen Ones walking on water down here, and they'll slice you up with rusty razors.)





**Figure 8-10.**

You'll find two kegs at the end of this side path.

Make your way back to that four-way intersection. The east fork leads to empty rooms and the north and west ones to a pit containing two Dragonets and two Basilisks. (It's a winnable fight, but there's no reward afterward. Use ranged weapons to shoot down that Basilisk above the north side of the pit.)

Instead, head east a short way, then duck north and blow the wall at 52,10,2012. Kill the Basilisks to the north and bear east to find a keg, then west until you reach a cave-in. Blow this wall. It allows you to reach the north side of the Dragonet/Basilisk pit and a long east-west corridor occupied by three Greater Dragonets. The first can be shot down with ranged weapons, but the sloping floor of the corridor may make it impossible to aim at the other two and so they will require hand-to-hand combat.

Now, what were those guys doing in the middle of this dark hall? I know, I know, all role-playing game monsters essentially wait around polishing their swords and waiting for the party to show up. (If the party doesn't show up, are there monster layoffs?)

But why wait right here! Go take a look. Specifically, look at the spot on the south wall where the ceiling descends to its lowest point. There's a secret room here, with two more powder kegs inside.





## Endgame



You've reached the far northwest corner of this convoluted level, and the end is almost in sight. The exit lies off to the south. But your biggest battles still lie before you.

Follow the east-west passage southwest to a "T" intersection. I don't recommend the southeast passage. It leads to a huge cavern empty of good and useful things and full of Fallen Ones. (It's a good bet there's a monster generator in there.) Not that you can't win this fight, but at what price?

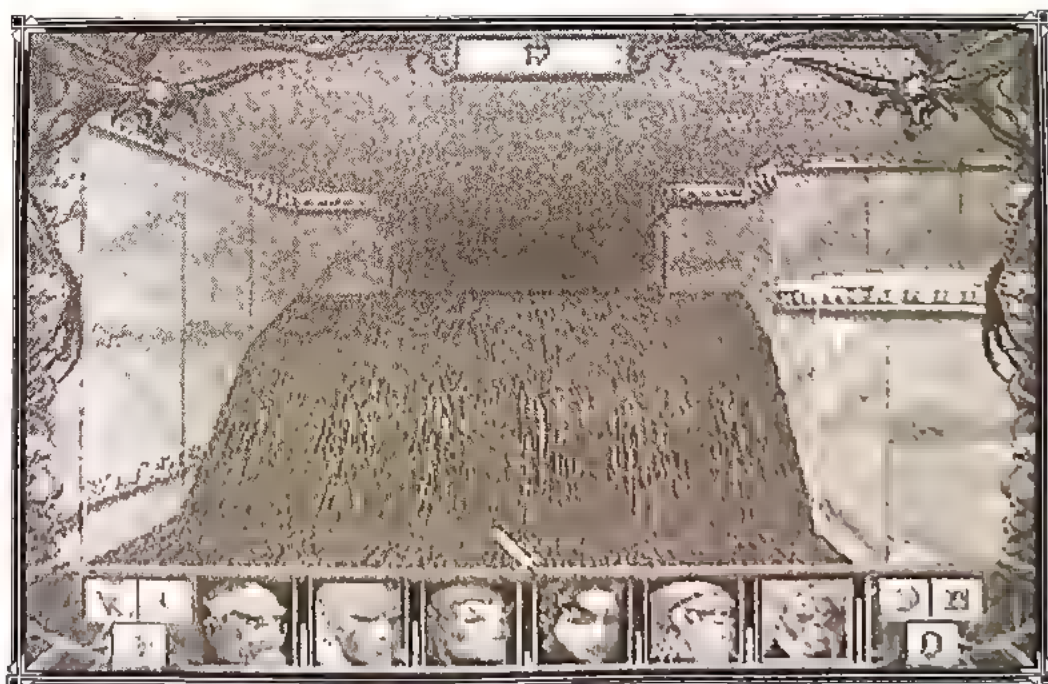
Instead, bear northwest and then south, and you'll reach the biggest concentration of ruins in the Upper Caves. Unfortunately, someone else found them first. Four Greater Dragonets approach from the east with blood in their eyes.

I hope your spellcasters' mana is up to full. You're going to need all of it here. Unload at least two full-mana Fireball spells at the Dragonets. That should kill at least two outright, and you can mop up the survivors with weapon play.

Prize! Well, the *exit* is your prize, pal. After all, this is the last major combat of this level. And the view is your prize—the huge waterfall to the west (Figure 8-11) and the stone-pillared lake, the source of this level's huge underground river, are quite spectacular.



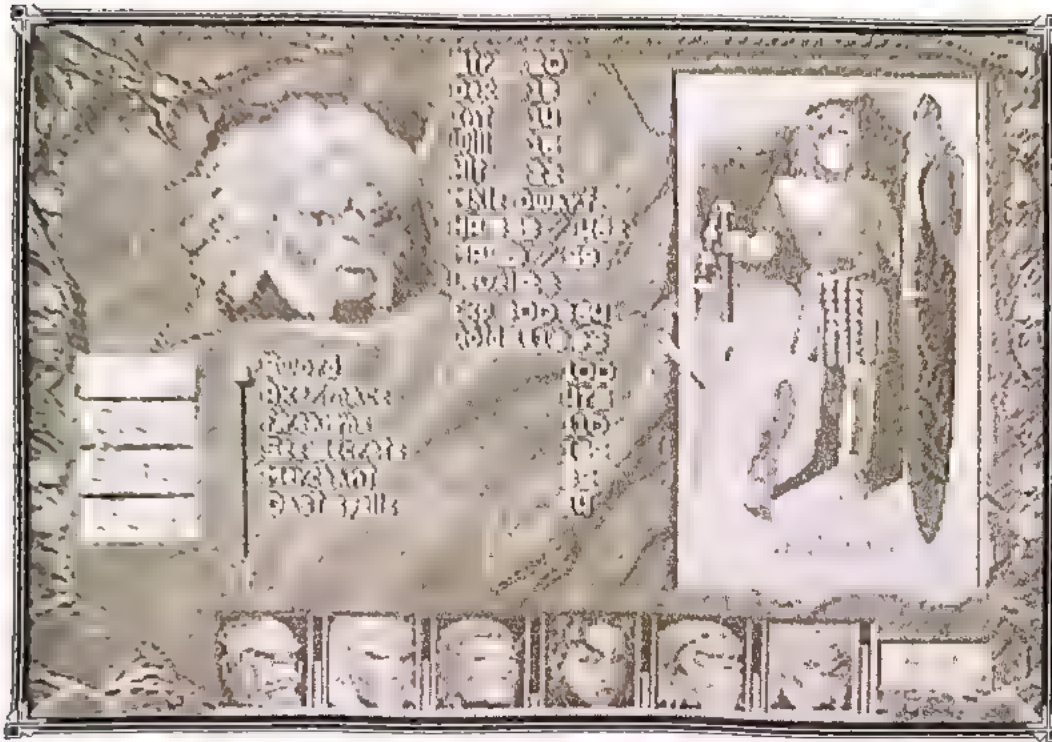
**Figure 8-11.**  
The waterfall







Ah, you want something a little more, er, *material*. OK, can do! There's a little leeway built into your use of powder kegs and you can blow walls, in succession, to the east, north, and east again and break into a dark compartment containing a Magical Flail and a Haste potion (Figure 8-12). (Expect to be interrupted by Dragonets during this little operation.) You can also blow the wall to the southeast at 30,27,1992 and find a Needler pistol.



**Figure 8-12.**  
The Magical Flail  
looks good with  
Manite armor.

And when you exit the rooms where you found the flail, head straight south to the lake. Adjust your position a bit so that you're next to the wall to the west. This sets you up to make a running leap onto the top of the pillar to the south. Here you'll find the spear Dragon Claw and two healing potions. Turn east to jump back to shore, and bear southeast.

**Note:** If you happen to fall off instead, swim to the northwest corner of the lake, where you'll find stairs that will allow you to hop out of the water. You may have to fight a Fallen One or two along the way.





However, while in the water, keep to the south side of the lake as much as possible and do not allow yourself to be sucked into the river that flows out to the north. There's a time and a place for water sports, and this isn't it. We'll get to the pleasures of river travel in a moment.

Move southeast and then southwest, around the east end of the lake, and you'll reach a chamber with cave-ins to the west and north. Leave the west cave-in alone. (The room contains only Fallen Ones, and, if you've followed the guide's directions to the letter, you don't have enough powder kegs left to clear both cave-ins.)



**Figure 8-13.**  
These stairs lead to  
the Catacombs.



Blow the north wall. Ta-da! There's the exit to the Catacombs just to west (Figure 8-13). You can use it now, or you can stay and have a little unexpected fun.

## *The Undercaves*

The Upper Mines is a very linear level. It's one straight shot with a few cul-de-sac side paths—and the exploration of those is tightly controlled by the number of powder kegs available.



Now, the river beneath the Upper Mines ... well, that's another matter. It's almost a level unto itself. Fast and wild, it winds in the shape of a great "2" from the pool east of the Catacomb gates to a whirlpool west of the entrance to the Lower Caves. Beyond that, we haven't explored.

What do you say we do that now? There are two ways of getting to the whirlpool. One is by the caves themselves. It's a slower route and not without danger. If you're setting out after completing the level, you'll find that new monsters will have been generated at certain locations—notably Nameless Ones at the bottom of the "chute"—but it is a far safer course than the river itself. The

riverbed is patrolled by Nameless Ones, Dragonets, and Greater Dragonets, and you're whipped along so fast by the current that you won't have much chance of detouring around potential battles.

Either way, you'll have to fight Dragonets to enter the whirlpool itself. Once they're dead, you'll submerge and reappear in ... Where? The Founder's Cave? The river under Karegh-Konan? Your bath tub?

Nope! You surface in the Undercaves—the closest thing *Thunderscape* has to a secret level.

About a quarter the size of a normal level, this waterlogged region technically lies between the Upper and Lower Caves. There's nothing of enormous value here. The best weapon is the Magical Rapier in the southeast corner, and decent pieces of armor and combat scrolls are scattered here and there. So why explore it?

Well, why not? *Thunderscape* is full of strange and out-of-the-way places, and this one is more out-of-the-way than most. And if you visit right when you're starting the Upper Caves, you can find five extra powder kegs, which will relieve the party of the need to be cautious in their use later.

The key to success here is finding spots along the river's triangular course where you can come ashore.

The best spot is 24,16,2035. From here, you can reach a Giant Scorpion lair (one keg) to the south, a Basilisk lair to the southwest (one keg), and a second Basilisk lair (two kegs) to the north and

west. Close to the drain, and so a little tougher to reach, is the landing below a Basilisk lair (one keg) at 10,19,2037.







The downsides are two:

- 1) The current is extremely fast, and since you won't know which end is up here, you'll probably wind up getting spat out the exit—the top of the waterfall in the Lower Caves—at least once.

- 2) The number of monsters can be overwhelming. The Undercaves probably has two to three times the critters-per-square-foot of the Upper Caves. It's home to a huge family of Basilisks and a good number of Giant Scorpions (who seem to have taken some fighting lessons since you met them in the Ogre Caves). Use ranged weapons to reduce their number at every opportunity, and spells to blast groups of them at close range.



And don't hang around once you've nailed the items you want. The water's the safest place for the party. Head for the drain, exit the stream below the waterfall in the Lower Caves and make your way back to the Upper Caves. It's Catacombs time.





## *The Catacombs: Living with Death*

*The party gets all keyed up, scratches a Nocturnal and finds a buddy, and breaks into the game's inner sanctum to find the game designers horsing around. Oh, and it reaches the Sewers.*

The sub-basement of the Radiant Citadel is a catacomb in the old, formal sense of the word. That is, it's a crypt. And, with the passage of the Nocturnals, the dead have grown restless. You'll often have to fight them off as you look for the ladder up to the Citadel Sewers. Most of the time, however, you'll be embroiled in puzzles. When you begin the level, the first isn't that far away.

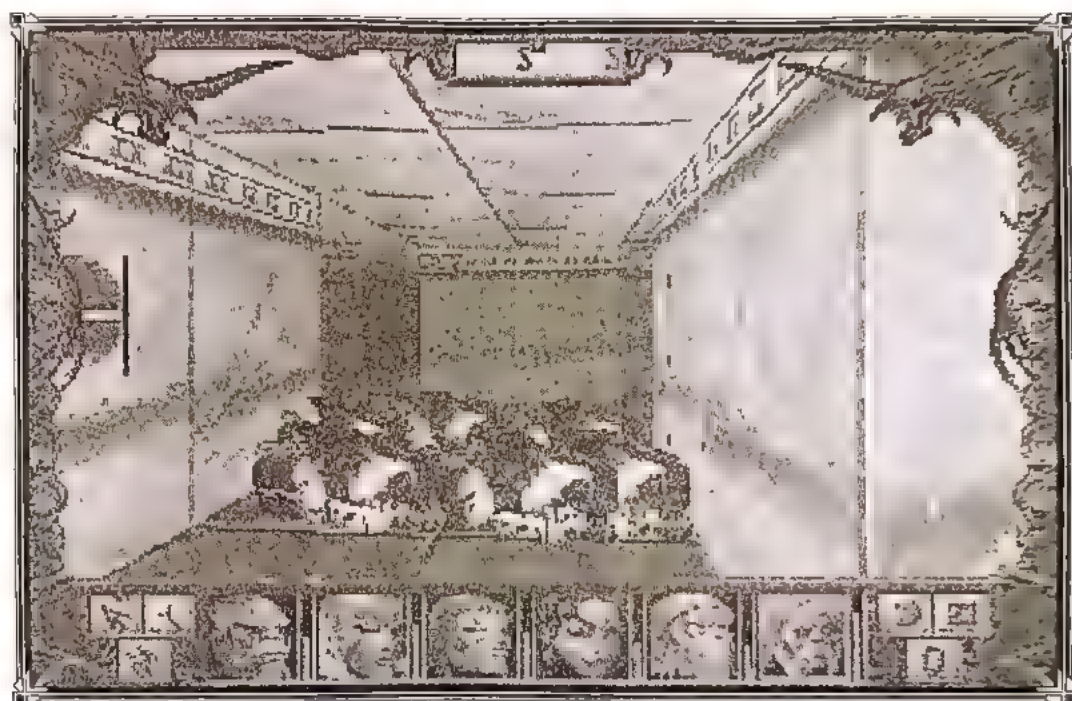


## In the Vault



**Figure 9-1.**  
Hey, forget Finea  
and Gnaw. I'm  
going to open my  
own shop with this  
stuff!

You surface in a formal mausoleum in the northwest corner of the level. Hit the switch on the east wall to open the gate to the south, and kill all the Skeleton Lords you find here. They'll arrive in number, but will go down easily, each leaving behind plate mail chest armor and a long sword (Figure 9-1). (Guess you know where to come if you need money, eh?)

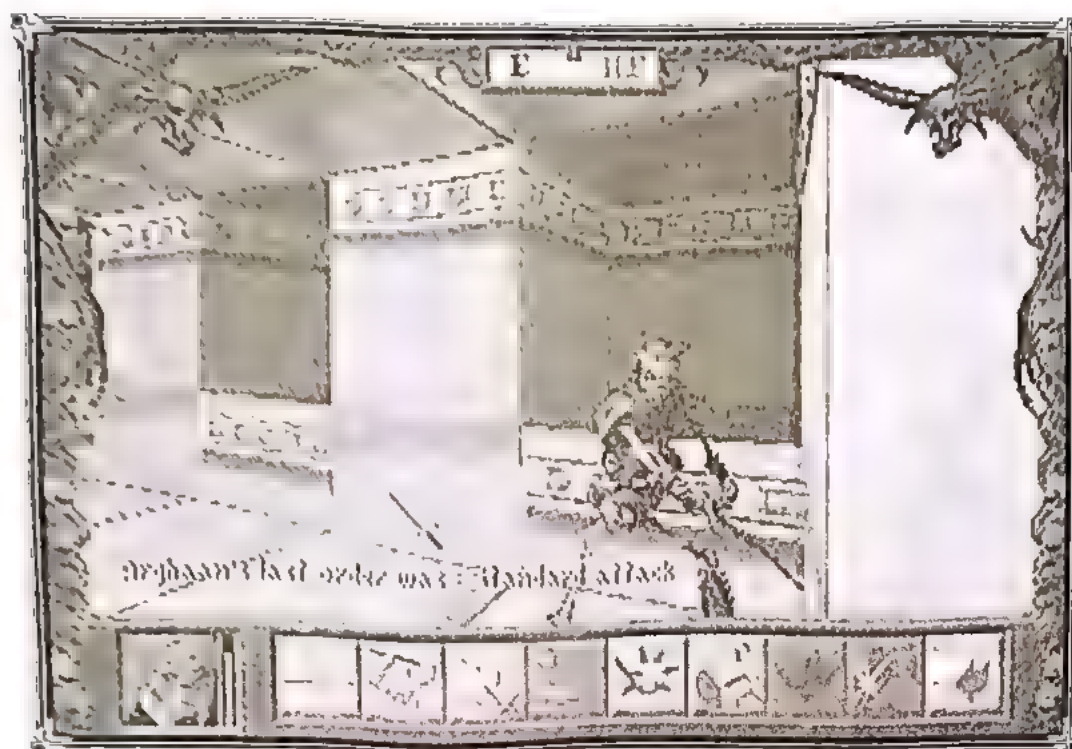


Bear west, throw the switch beside the first door on the right, and enter. You'll hear a high, "Wipeout-style" laugh and be accosted by a Skeleton Lord ("You disturb our rest!") (Figure 9-2). Now, really disturb his rest, take the chest (175 C/P), and turn around to discover that the gate has closed and locked. (Oops.) Check the left-hand alcove at the rear of the room for a green button that opens the gate again, and return to the corridor.

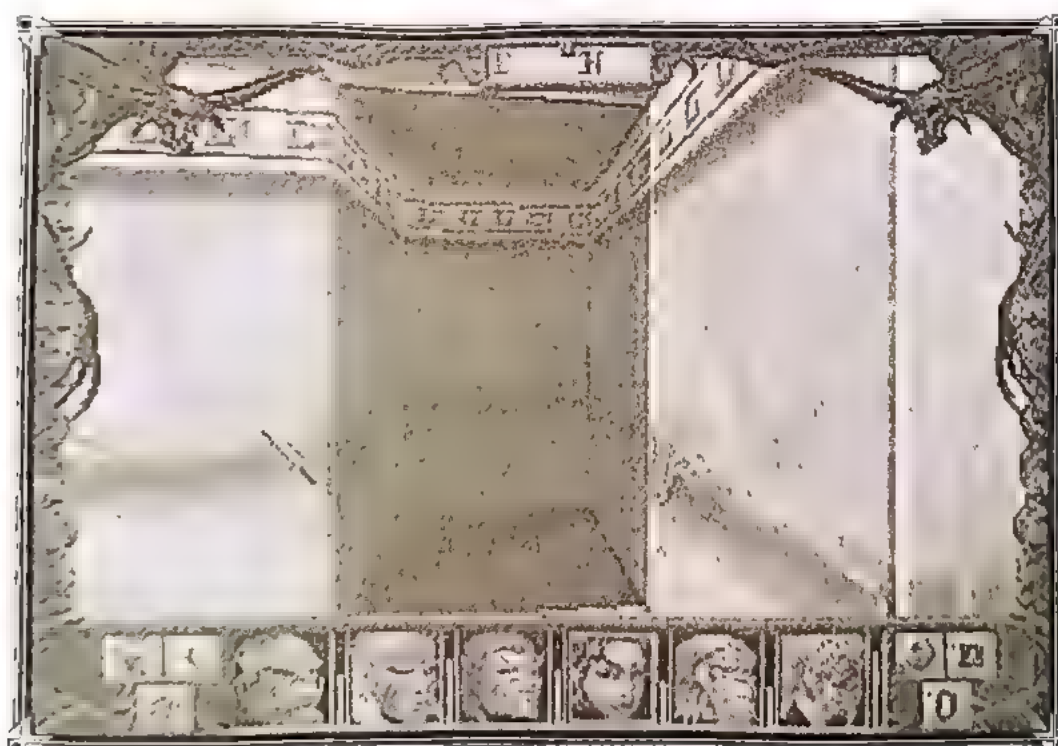
If you enter the room all the way west, you'll be locked in again. This time, look for a green button in the left rear alcove. This opens an alcove just north of the gate (Figure 9-3). Step into it, and the north wall will descend, admitting you to a darkened chamber with two chests holding a total of 1,120 C/P and random weapons.

However, the important item here is the Crypt Key. Take it and punch the blue button on the north wall to reach the corridor again.





**Figure 9-2.**  
Skeleton Lords need  
their sleep.

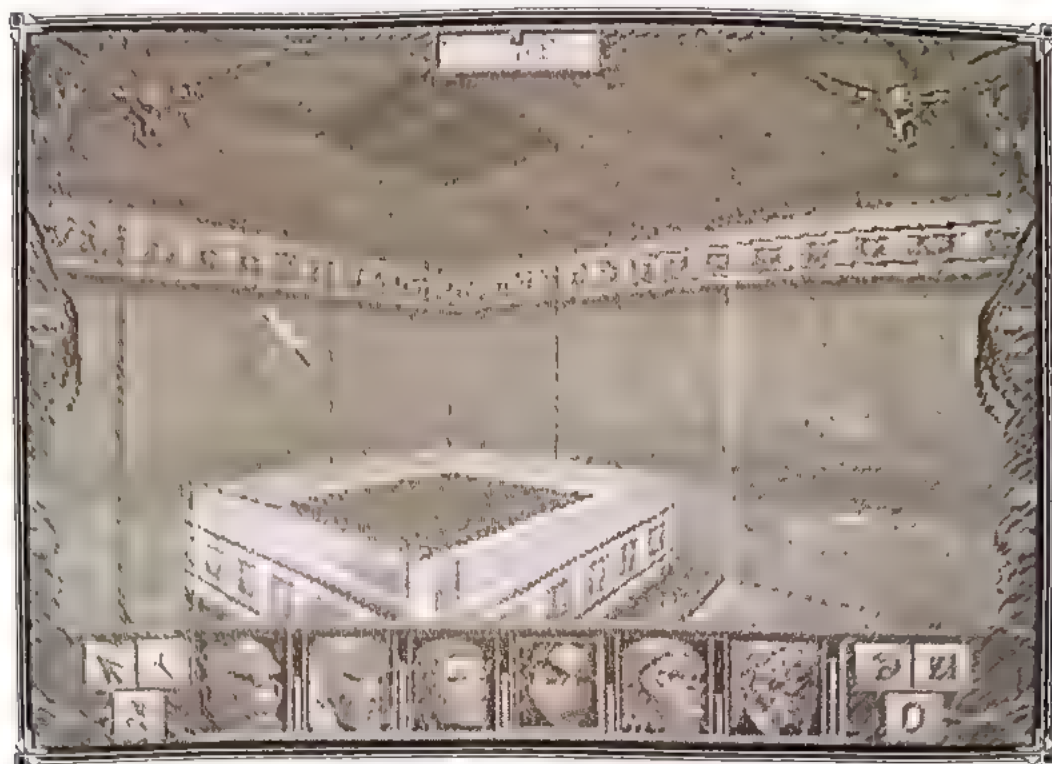


**Figure 9-3.**  
Step in here for a  
nice surprise.

Head south to continue your sweep of the crypt perimeter. You'll find another chest containing 1,000 GP in a chamber off to the west, and, in the southeast corner, water dripping from a ceiling grate and gathering on a platform below (Figure 9-4). (Note the location of this pool for later reference.) Now that you've got the Crypt Key, you can open the exit to the south and deal with the Damned Ones who've gathered here.



**Figure 9-4.**  
Something tells me  
this water is going  
to prove useful.



(No, that's not me being rude about monsters; that's what this variation of Vanguard Keep's Wraiths is called. Like the Wraiths, they're frail when attacked with conventional weapons, and lethal when allowed to cast spells.)

However, we haven't checked the center of the crypt yet. In the northern chamber, you'll find an urn in an artfully lighted cell. Outside the southern chamber, you'll learn from a sign that this is the resting place of Mondurain the Greedy and that "death did not rob him of his paranoia of theft." So you can expect this room to be trapped, yes!

Trapped and a half! When you enter the room, the gate locks, the ceiling drops, and bye-bye Gonchar & Co., Ltd., unless you can hustle to the door and pick the lock in time.

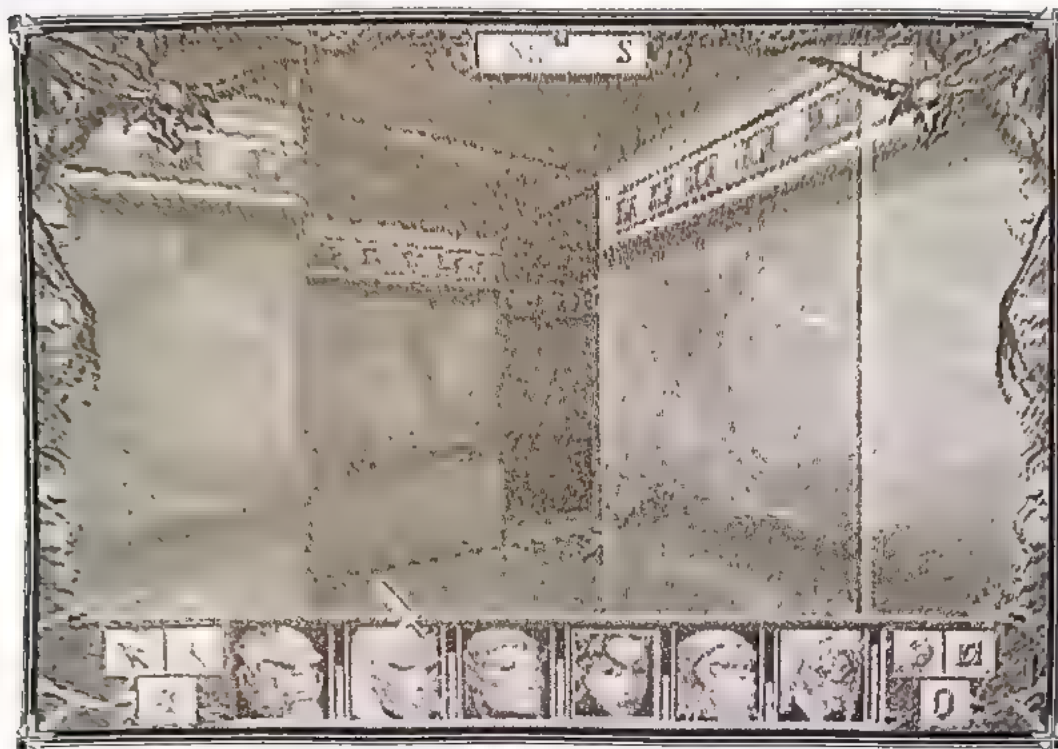
That's not hard to do once you know about the trap. However, you may still get trapped here by a bug that fixes the party in place when the ceiling descends. You can avoid this by adjusting your position so you don't straddle more than one floor tile.

After negotiating the trap, you almost wonder why old Mondurain bothered. The two chests here contain just 350 GP.

Naturally, there's more to it. Before you enter, return to the perimeter corridor and check the alcove just east of the treasure room for a green button. This opens an additional alcove immediately to the south, revealing a lever. Throw the lever *twice*. When you return to the room, the trap will be disabled and a secret room will have opened in the southeast corner



(Figure 9-5). Inside, you'll find a chest with 5,000 GP, Disintegrate and Magical Barrier scrolls and a Magical Claymore. Not too shabby, Mondurain. Rest in peace. We'll look after your stuff.



**Figure 9-5.**  
A secret room is revealed!

Leave the crypt by the gate to the south, kill any Damned Ones lingering here and move west. Along the way, search the chambers west of the crypt entrance for an empty flask. At the end of the hall, head north, then west again, and read the sign.

## Eight Wraiths Puzzle

You've reached the Tomb of the Eight—the first of several significant puzzles in the Catacombs. (The Mondurain business was just to prime your carburetor.)

Head north again and get the "Eight Wraiths" and "Puzzle" documents from the table here. "Eight Wraiths" is unrevealing, but "Puzzle" pretty much lays out the rules. You need to open three sequential gates in the northwest corner of the room to the west. Blocking your path to the gates are large, black blocks whose movements are controlled by buttons and switches on the walls.

And knowing the right sequence isn't enough. "Some blocks," the scroll notes, "move faster than others." Gird yourself, save your game, and give it a go.

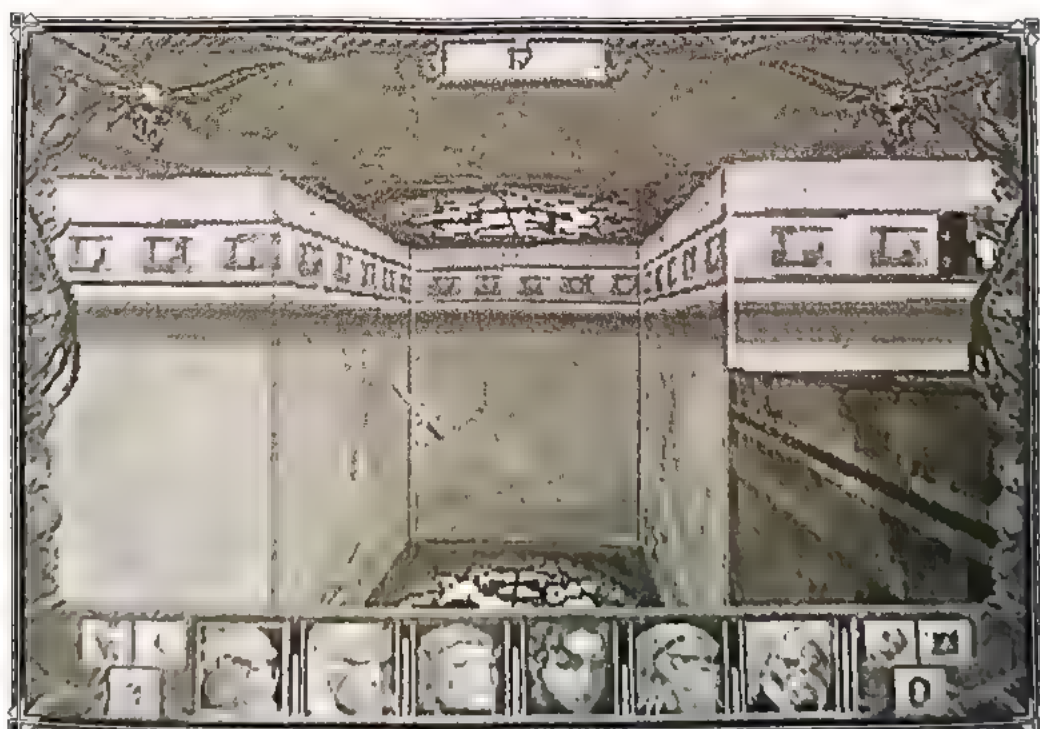




It's not really all that tough. The correct solution involves pressing five buttons in a certain order. You can sort this out by trial-and-error—pushing a button and seeing what it does—but here's the quick-and-dirty solution:

- 1) Move all the way west, turn south and press the blue button in the alcove here. This clears a path to your west.
- 2) Move northwest, then east, and push the green button you'll find on the west wall. You'll hear a wild laugh in the distance. That signifies you've taken care of one gate.
- 3) Move south and then west. You'll see a blue button on the wall to the northwest. Push it, and you'll hear the laugh again. That's two gates.
- 4) Now, here's the part people will miss because they'll think they can't reach it. Turn south and belly up to the block here. Press the blue button in the alcove two squares south of you. This turns on the teleporter behind you. (If it's glowing, ya done good.)
- 5) Step into the teleporter (Figure 9-6). You'll rematerialize in an alcove just to the north. Head northeast until you can't go any further and reach across the block and hit the blue button to the northeast. The block to your east will push you west into the now-open corridor to the tomb.

**Figure 9-6.**  
Once you've got  
the teleporter up  
and running,  
you've almost got  
this puzzle licked.





Kill the Damned One here and march north into the tomb. You can open four of the five sarcophaguses, but only the one to the northeast contains anything of value (the Sage's Ring, which increases the wearer's Intelligence stat by one). Get the Wraith's Key Eight from the floor next to the sarcophagus to the southeast and exit the tomb to the northwest.

You'll step into an enormous chamber with a huge locked box at its center and tentacles extending in all directions. It's defended by the Eight—eight Wraith-like servants of the Avatar. The best advice here is to chop them up with conventional weapons before they can use their spells.

You won't need instructions here, as there are no secrets involved in finding the remaining seven keys. It's a pretty simple treasure hunt, just make a circuit of the room and look in all the nooks and crannies. Then again, it's always possible to overlook something, so here's a list of their locations.

Wraith's Key 1: 4,2,1052

Wraith's Key 2: 2,11,1052

Wraith's Key 3: 2,25,1052

Wraith's Key 4: 5,27,1052

Wraith's Key 5: 14,27,1052

Wraith's Key 6: 25,22,1052

Wraith's Key 7: 26,12,1052

You'll also find Hero Key 3 (8,19,1040), 5,620 GP (in three chests), and a range of random weapons.

Save your game and let's take a peek at that puzzle box at room-center. It's protected by eight locks and by magical barriers like the one in the southeast corner or the Founder's Cave.

But you can see beyond the barriers, and it looks as though there's some pretty nifty stuff in there. Just methodically unlock each of the locks—two on each side—and then throw the switch on the south side. The barriers will vanish and you can go for the gusto: Radiant plate leg and chest armor and boots, and a Manite great helm, and a Radiant Sapphire Amulet.

The moment you grab the amulet, someone will raise a cry of "Thief!" and you'll find yourself surrounded by eight Damned Ones. Not a good place to be. Fortunately, there's not enough room for them to engage you



all at once in this small room, or you'd be toast-with-armor, but the four or five that can attack you immediately are enough to cause trouble—especially if you don't have the initiative. Throw a high-mana Fireball spell into your usual roster of weapon strikes just to be on the safe side. Head back to the puzzle room and the corridor beyond.

Say, you're just whizzing along here, aren't you? You've explored the whole northern half of the Catacombs without a real hitch or (I hope) any ill effects.

## Columns and Pillars

You may have noticed that there's a little more to the puzzle-room area than the puzzle itself. Just west of where you found the "Tomb of the Eight" sign, you'll see a white button to the south. Push it, and a passage will open to the west. Follow the passage, paying a brief visit to the room to the north to collect a Healing potion, and you'll come to a room with three columns moving back and forth across your path.

There's no way to turn them off. Getting through here is purely a matter of timing. Go to the left when the first column is at the right. When the second column moves back to the right, and out of your way, step into the space behind it before you can get smushed by the first column. Deal with the third column the same way, and you'll find yourself beside an apparently nonfunctional teleport, overlooking a large, pillared chamber.

This is another puzzle, and it's a very simple one. You need to jump from pillar-top to pillar-top to reach two buttons—one on the west wall, one on the north. The teleporter actually *does* work, but it's one-way only. The other platform is in the west wall below and is used to return to your current position if you should fall.

Don't worry about falling. You won't get hurt. And don't worry about *not* falling. There's nothing to find down below except moss.

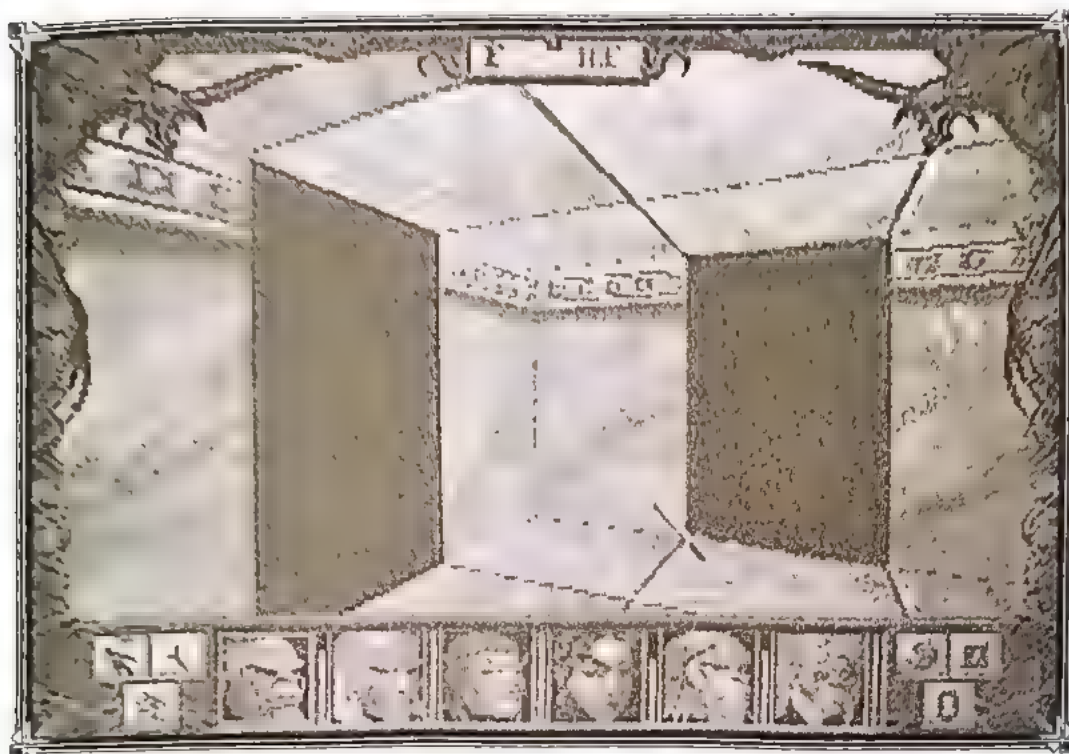
To reach the west button, just walk onto the pillar to the southeast, then hop to the southwest, and it's as good as pushed. To reach the north one, jump to the northeast, southeast, northeast, north and northwest. Then save your game. The jumps are easy—no running jumps are required—but it's easy to get confident and sloppy.

Once both buttons have been pressed, a gate will open at the south end of the room. Hop over there and enter it. At the north end of another Karegh-Konan-like corridor, you'll find 5,225 GP, random equipment, and the Tomb Key.





Head back down the corridor and bear east into a room with dark doors on three sides (Figure 9-7). Pull the lever behind the one to the north, and wait a few judicious seconds before opening the one to the east. A massive stone is moving south past this door to create an exit corridor for the party, and they'll be little more than a stain on the paving stones if you're too quick about it. (The southern door leads to an empty alcove.)



**Figure 9-7.** Don't rush through the east door after you pull the lever behind the north one.

### **Loot!**

When you do leave the room, bear north and you should find yourself back in the east-west corridor you entered when you left the crypt.

Before you move on, here's a little side quest to try out that Tomb Key. Bear east, and turn down the first hall on your right. Press the button in the first alcove to the west, and explore the rooms to the east.

Not bad. The northern of the two suites has a chest with 5,000 GP. And the southern? Well, read the sign. The ashes of a healer named Palmea are interred here. Beside the urn, you'll find Palmea's Ring.

The same key also gives you access to the two locked treasure rooms along the south wall of the east-west hallway to the north. Here you can obtain a range of random items and a bit of gold.



## Heading South

When the hall turns south, go into your patented Vanguard Keep Hall crouch—there are spellcasting machines at each end of this hall—and keep following the corridor. In the fifth alcove on the right, hit the button on the north wall. Head north again, and, in the second alcove on the right, throw the switch you just exposed.

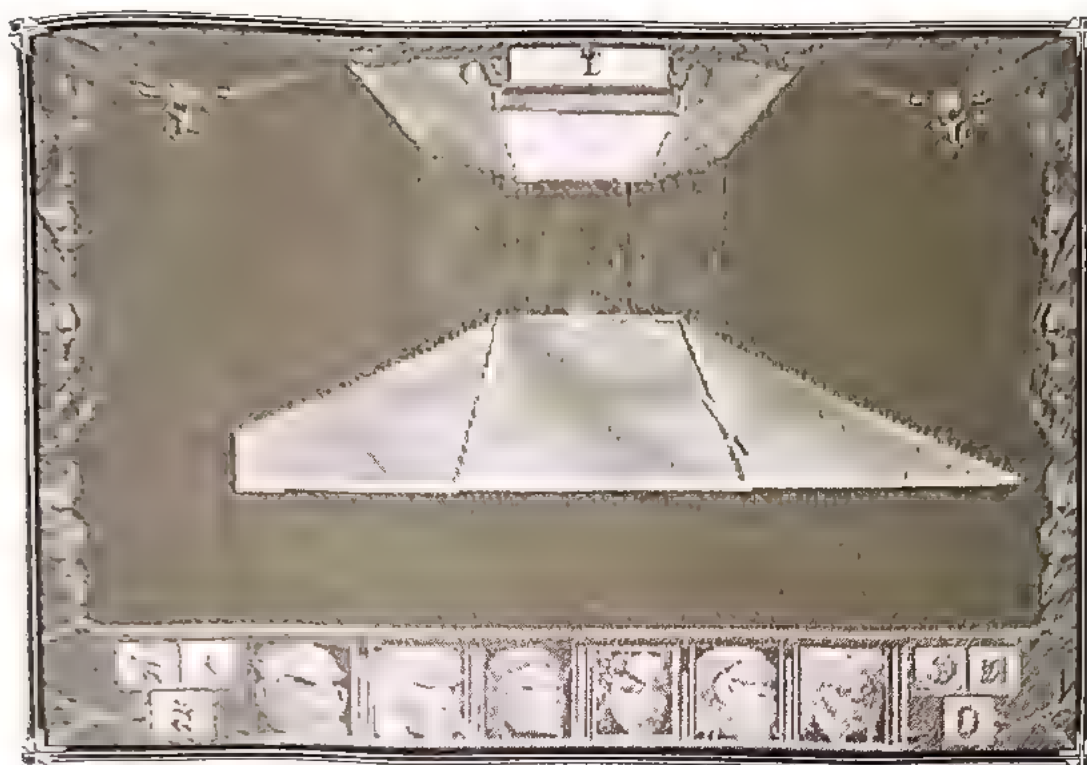
Then make your way south again and bear west at the end of the hall. You'll eventually reach a four-way intersection. Where to go? To the west, the corridor peters out into a series of empty alcoves. To the southwest, behind three locked gates, lies the Hall of Heroes. So that's where the Hero Keys come in! Unfortunately, you still only have one.

We're going to do something about that right now. Southeast of this junction is the tomb of a traitor named Keldus Magnor (Figure 9-8). "*Black was his heart, and black is his resting place,*" reads the inscription beside the door. "*May his soul be damned forever.*"

**Figure 9-8.**  
Here lies a traitor.



And his resting place really is black. This tomb is as dark as any room in *Thunderscape*. Most of the light comes from the weird glow from the urn at the end of the hall (Figure 9-9) and Ice Missile spells hurtling down the corridor. (Keep the party in its crouch.)



**Figure 9-9.**

Urn while you turn. Or something like that.

You've come to the right place. The second full room on the north side of this hall holds Hero Key 1. Continue heading east, and duck into the first hall to the south to find a chest with 500 GP. Finally, in the room at the east end of the hall, get the Radiant Onyx Amulet. Now let's get out of here. This place is creepy.

Now you can open the first gate to the Hall of Heroes with Hero Key One, and see that the hall ends to the west in a great door. However, you're still missing Hero Key Two. There's just one place left you can look for it: the north branch of the four-way intersection.

## Zombierville

Apart from a quick hop west to grab a chest, this path will take you north, west, and south from the junction to a lever-operated gate and a whole army of zombies. These poor undead critters don't have anything going for them except hit points (250), immunities to poison and death spells, and their sheer mind-numbing numbers. However, they have no resistance to *anything*, and beating up on them is like fighting practice targets. Just cast the occasional Aid spell so the disease they communicate to party members doesn't get out of hand.







**Figure 9-10.**  
This doesn't look good.



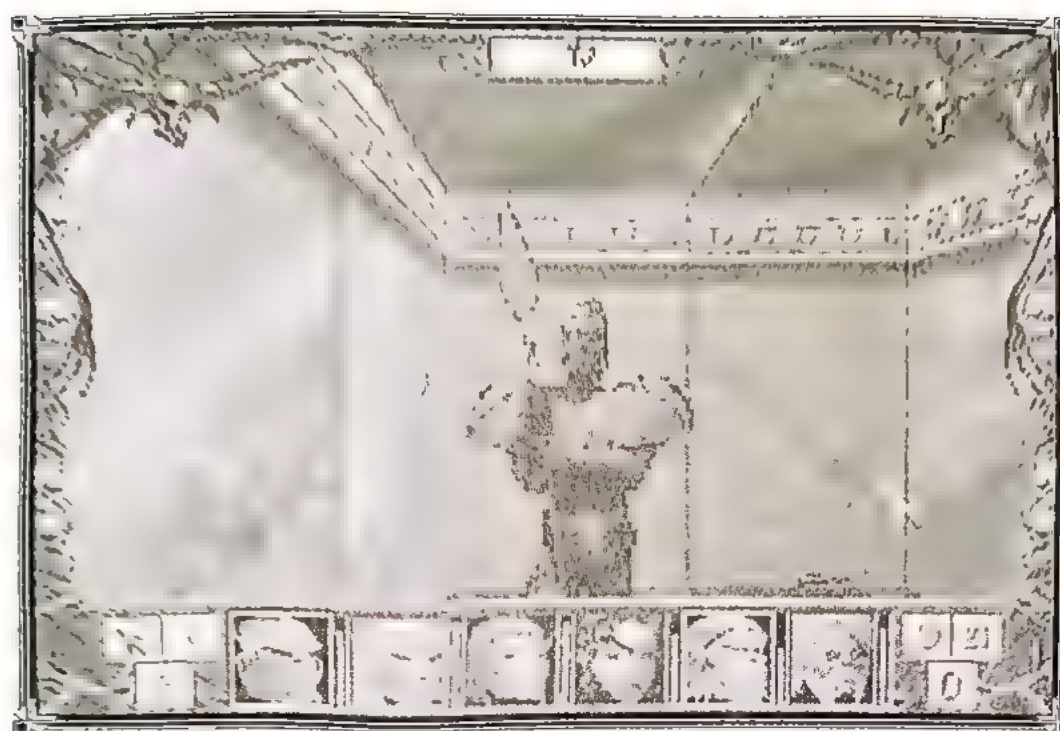
After you turn straight west, you'll eventually come to a door. Inside, you'll find a troubled skeleton equipped with rusty armor and a strange speech (Figure 9-11). He grabs his head, moans about sacred water and an urn, and begs you to destroy the latter.

You can't help him right now, but you can help yourself. You'll find Hero Key Two and a Radiant Ruby Amulet on the floor. That means you can finally reach the Hall of Heroes.

### **No Way Out**

But wouldn't you know it? There's the little matter of getting out again. The gate you used to reach this warren doesn't open from this side.

*Thunderscape* plays with your head a bit here. There's a blue button high on the wall at 32,52,1052 just southwest of the exit. Aha, you'll think, the trigger for a secret exit! Not hardly. It does open a secret door just to the north, but this passage leads, via a second secret door, to the same gate, and that is still locked down when you get there.



**Figure 9-11.**  
Tophet: Portrait of a  
young dead man in  
trouble

Happily, there's another button. Make your way west, northwest, and west again to map coordinates 20,45,1052. A chamber will beckon darkly to the south. Enter this room and look for the button on a wall to the southwest. Press it, and race back to the exit at top speed. The gate is now open, but only for a short time. If it closes before you reach it, you'll have to go through this again.

## Hall of Heroes

Head back to the four-way intersection and bear south and west. Open the three gates to the Hall of Heroes and, once inside this stately chamber (Figure 9-12), press the button inside the sarcophagus to the southeast. (The others are empty or can't be opened.) This opens a door in the west wall. Enter this passage and click on the double doors at its western end.

And nothing happens. Zip. Another Zombieville button overlooked? Perhaps a look at the inscriptions north and south of the door can help.

The one to the south reads:

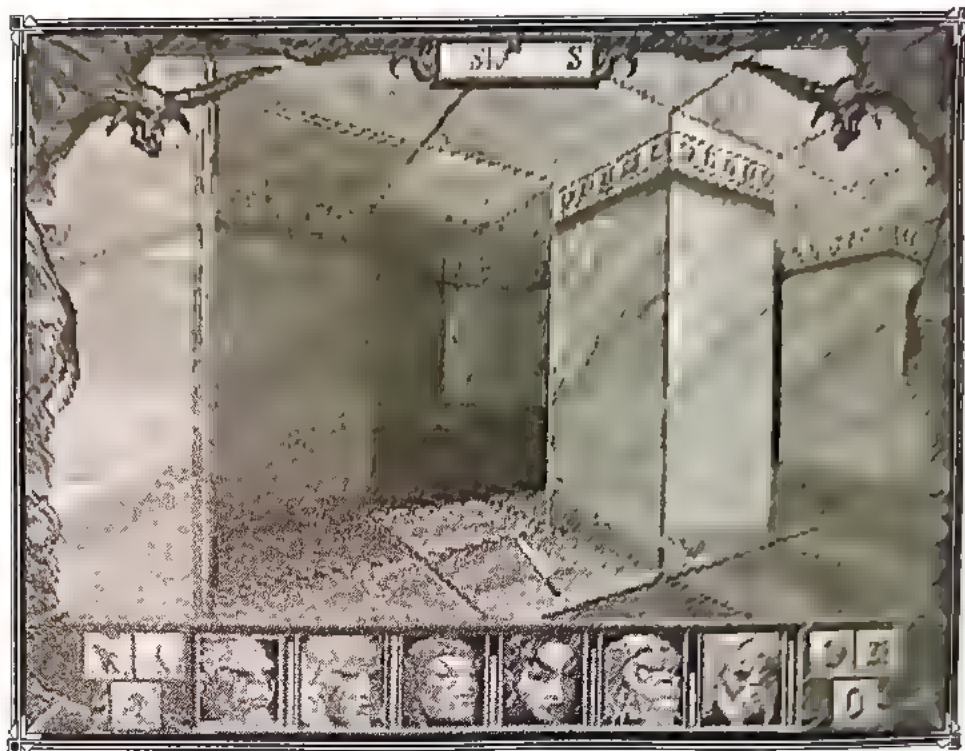
*Only one whose blood flows TRUE can enlighten us.*

And the one to north reads:

*Only one brilliant as the sky shall enlighten us.*

**Figure 9-12.**

Look for a button  
in this box.



Interesting—the references are both to colors. (Remember the crystals puzzle back in the Vanguard Keep Towers?) Come to think of it, you've recently found items in precisely those two colors: the Radiant Ruby Amulet from Zombieville (red) and the Radiant Sapphire Amulet (blue) from the Avatar's treasure room.

Use these jewels on the tables in the alcoves next to the inscriptions, and they'll light up. You'll hear an elevator-bell "ding" ("Fourth floor, dirks, daggers, and dinnerware ...") and the doors will pop open. Around a half-dozen Skeleton Lords will be in your face. Once you've killed them, explore the room beyond.

That was quick. There's not much to see in this tiered chamber until you press the green button on the south side of the risers. This opens yet another door leading west, which admits you to a small maze southwest of Zombieville. Here you'll find a small concentration of Damned Ones and three chests containing medical potions and about 1,000 G.P. To the north, you'll find a secret door connecting up with one of that zombie warrens' southwestern tendrils.



### *Last Exit for Twenty Levels (Gas, Food, Dead People)*

And to the west—break out the champagne!—you'll find a ladder leading up to the Sewers. You're at the level's end. You should be tickled. The Radiant Citadel proper is one smelly trek away.





Hey, what's the matter? Calacombs got your tongue? <grin> You probably don't feel quite settled in your mind. There are certain areas on your automap that you *know* you haven't explored. And what about that moaning, head-holding skeleton? Can't you do something for him? (OK, so he's a living skeleton. He's a really nice guy if you get to know him.)

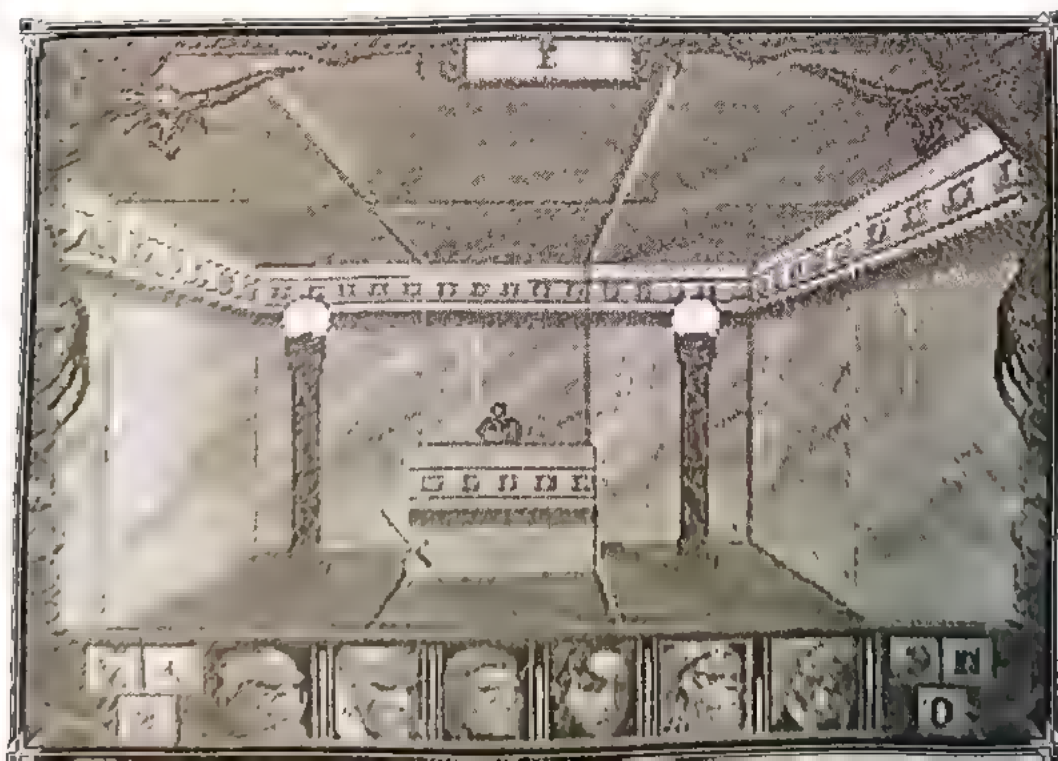
### Tophet the Skeleton

One could almost overlook this encounter as a red herring. But it isn't. It is a complex and delicately-framed puzzle—one that, successfully completed, will net the party a new recruit. There's little direction from the game (apart from the skeleton's complaint) on how it works, and you're expected to sort it out based largely on observation.

Did you find and take the empty flask in your explorations southwest of the crypt? If so, good. You've already taken care of the first step.

Have you filled it with water? There's just one place where this can be accomplished: the room in the southeast section of the crypt. But it's not exactly the sacred water the skeleton mentioned. In fact, it's slimy.

You need some way to purify it. If you read the sign outside the healer Palmea's tomb—"even in death she can cleanse the impure"—you'll know this is the perfect spot for that cleansing ritual (Figure 9-13). Click the flask of slimy water on the altar that holds the healer's urn, and sit back and enjoy the transformation. When it's over, the Slimy Water will be replaced by Pure Water.



**Figure 9-13.** Palmea's dead, but she can still purge impurities at a touch.



But what urn is giving the skeleton such trouble? Well, that's easier. Only one sinister urn has been identified in the Catacombs—that of the traitor, Keldus Magnor, in the southeast part of the level. Return to this forbidding crypt and click the Pure Water on Magnor's urn. It changes color, and crumbles to dust. The tomb is suddenly well-lit. The traitor's evil presence is gone.

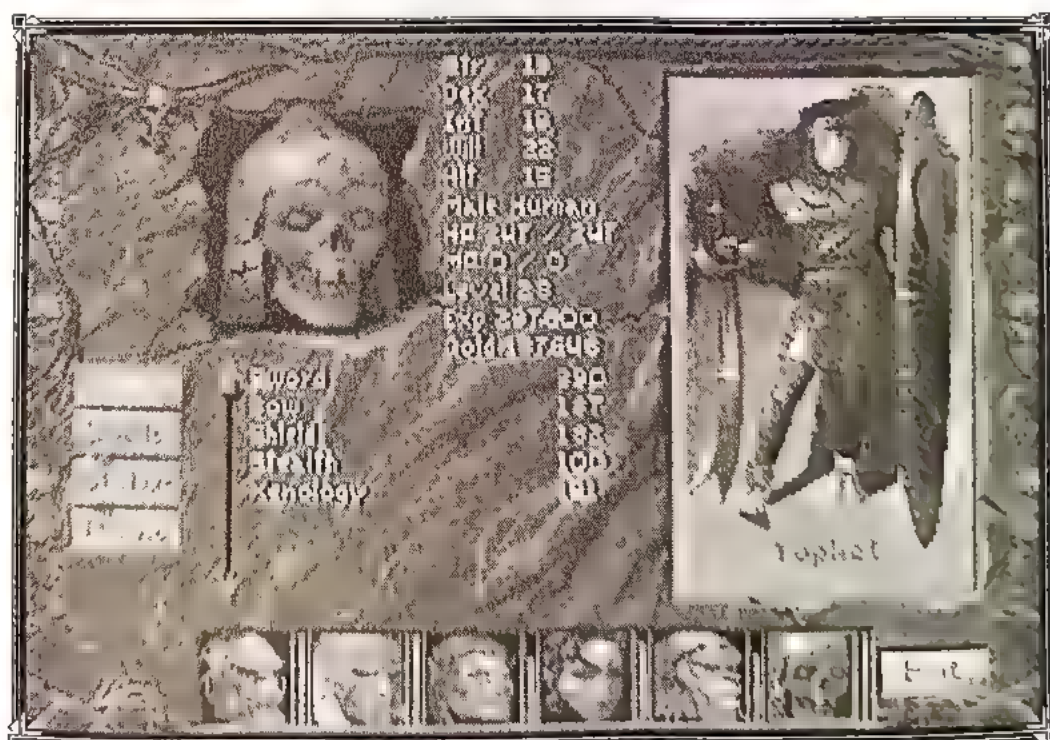
And when you return to the building in Zombieville, you'll find you have a new pal. The skeleton, now in better command of himself, reveals himself as Tophet, a former Radiant Knight, and begs to join you. He would like to return to the dust, and cannot while this evil "presence" lingers in Aden.

Recruit him in place of Arghaan. Not that the dwarf has been a bad companion. But Tophet (Figure 9-14) carries an ungodly blade called the Sword of Ashes. Clad in Manite and talented in sword, bow and shield, he'll also point the way to the Sewers and identify the presence of the button in a sarcophagus in the Hall of Heroes.

Besides, Arghaan's sort of a jerk. (True to form, he leaves in a fit of pique.)

**Figure 9-14.**

Just look at that sword.





## Skryptors (Or is it Skriptors?)

Then there's the matter of that unvisited region on your automap. This locked room is last bastion of the Catacombs and is the single most obscure element in all the vastness of *Thunderscape*. Many players won't even see the door and, of those, only the most diligent (or the most twisted) will be able to find their way in.

Naturally, we're going to tell you how to meet the Skryptors inside this most secret of secret rooms.

This rectangular chamber, reached by a single door, is located north of the western part of Zombieville and south of the region where you searched for the seven remaining Wraith keys.

The door won't become visible until you throw a hard-to-see, knee-level switch at 23,37,1027—a real hotbed of zombie activity—and even then reveals nothing unless you click an *object* on the door.

Then, and only then, do you learn there's a sign on the door:

*Skriptors—Nap Time: 9-11*

*Please keep the door closed!*

*Funny ... this door has no lock, yet it won't open.*

Oh, but it does open. You simply need to have the key.

I can hear you already. "Huh? Key? You just said the door doesn't have a lock. What kind of strategy guide is this, anyway?"

Well, a lockless door requires a lockless key. And the Lockless Key can be found in the East Mines at map coordinates 34,3,427—a remote dead-end alley in the featureless north-central section. Refer to The Lockless Key section in Chapter 6 for specifics on how to find it.

Admittedly, this is six full levels back in the game. But you can still get the key if you want it and it won't take more than 15 minutes or so. (Your mileage may vary.) Call up your options screen. Set difficulty to the lowest level, delay time to short, and turn weapons animations off. Find your way back to the Catacombs entrance, re-enter the Upper Caves and go jump in the lake.





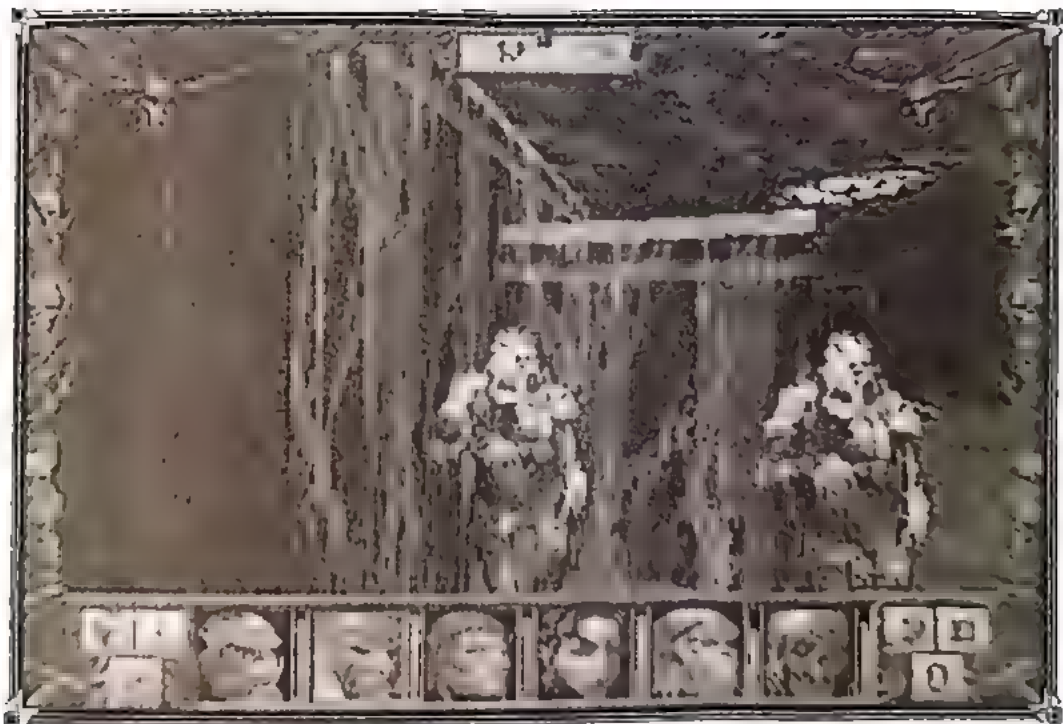


You heard me. Jump in the lake. This will take you at lightning speed through the Upper Caves, Undercaves, a small section of the Lower Caves, and the Founder's Cave to Karegh-Konan. Yes, there will be fights along the way—especially under the Upper Caves. But with the difficulty set to the easiest level, and you slamming through the combat with the "F8" key, you should win them in record time. Ride the elevator up and use the access tunnel just south of the Final Gates to reach the city foyer. Exit west directly into the East Mines.

The bad news: You'll have to walk back. But don't walk. Strut. You'll have the coolest inventory item on the block.

Use the Lockless Key on the door. Two of the six Skryptors will be right there to meet you when it opens (Figure 9-15). They look like zombies, have 300 hit points, but do just one to six blunt damage with their primary attack.

**Figure 9-15.**  
See anyone you  
know?





This is a bit weird. It gets weirder when they die. You'll get the following comments:

*As the skriptor falls in pieces, it manages to speak:*

*"OW!"*

*The skriptor seems confused about its death.*

*"Say something? I can't think of anything."*

*As the skriptor collapses, it utters:*

*"I still say it's too easy."*

*The skriptor seems indifferent to its fate:*

*"It's only a scratch!"*

*The skriptor cackles as it collapses:*

*"You're not Klaus\*."*

*The skriptor keels over in agony, yelling "Auuuhhhaah!" as it does.*

- \* Klaus, the chief engineer at the Golem factory, is a loose end who, like Lord Eradu, gets mentioned once and never surfaces in person.

Weird game, eh? After you defeat the Skryptors, you can search this enclave and find the Sword of Ashes (which Tophet also carries), Whisper, the axe Deathwish, and two chests, one containing 5,000 GP. You'll also find a genuinely unopenable door in the south wall.

The weapons and the money are real. The Sword of Ashes and Whisper each add ten to the user's Sword skill. In addition, the former does double damage to skeletal creatures and the latter increases the chance of a critical hit. Deathwish adds ten to the user's Axe/mace skill.

But the Skryptors (or Skriptors—the game uses both spellings) are essentially an in-joke. *Thunderscape* designers are known atSSI as "scripters." The "Nap Time" sign is a reference to a real-life sign on the door to the scriptors' room. And comments like "I still say it's too easy" reflect the debate among *Thunderscape's* creators over how to pitch the game's difficulty level.

Pretty neat, huh? After that, the Sewers is going to seem anti-climactic.







## *Cleaning Out the Sewers*

*The party finds a shop, plays with water for fun and profit, repairs an engine, activates a bridge, stops a flood, throws many a switch, and, at long last, steps out of the Sewers into the moat of the Radiant Citadel.*

You'll be happy to learn that monsters in the Sewers aren't a problem. Cellars Rats, Ooze Wurms, and the odd zombie can be tackled easily. The focus in this final pre-Citadel level is a rigorous maze ruled by water, buttons, and levers and a wide range of puzzles.

You begin the level in its far southwest corner. Descend from your starting point into a small plaza and kill the rats and any reinforcements that arrive from the north.



## Getting Started (Wash Your Hands Afterward)

This will give you a little breathing space. Your first task here is to get the lay of the land. That means reaching the shop—a shop! in the *SEWERS*?—and the storage rooms. The shop is close by. The search for the storage rooms and the keys to enter them will take you all over the southern part of the map.

If the party's still in its crouch from ducking spells in the Catacombs, keep it there. Some passages here (especially in the first part of the level) don't have ceilings high enough to admit a walking party, but can accommodate a crawling one.

Bear west until you see a window in the north wall. Jump up and through it, bear east when you land, and tap the button in the first alcove to the south. You'll hear a gate open.

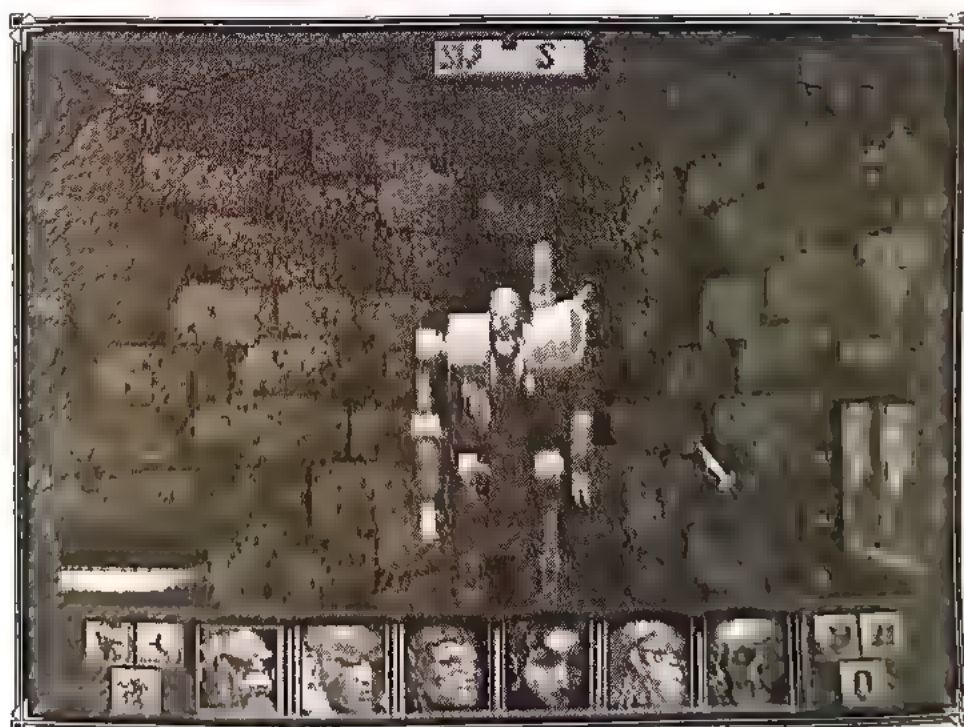
Head west and north, through the low tunnel, and you'll see a green button on an east wall. Press it, and you'll hear a door open. Now, quickly, head south, east through the low tunnel, and then north, and throw the lever you'll find here. That secures the door—which closes if you're not quick off the mark—and you can head north into what appears to be a civilized area.

Head west to check this stuff out and—Yikes! Steel Steam Golem at 10 o'clock (Figure 10-1). Ready with that Lightning Bolt spell!



**Figure 10-1.**

The Steel Steam Golem as a doorstep





Whoa. Delay that order, helmsman. The golem's not attacking. What is it, Prototype 17, begging for his old job back? Click on it, and you'll find it has been cannibalized for parts. Is this an indication that the Nocturnals are getting a hard time?



## Floyd's

Could be. You, on the other hand, are in fine fettle: You have just found yourself another shop (Figure 10-2). (It's about time. Do you suppose Gnaw ever knew what hit him?) It's run by a garrulous young Goreaux named Floyd. He has the manner of a standup comic who's had way too much coffee, but he's an affable chap and eager to help.

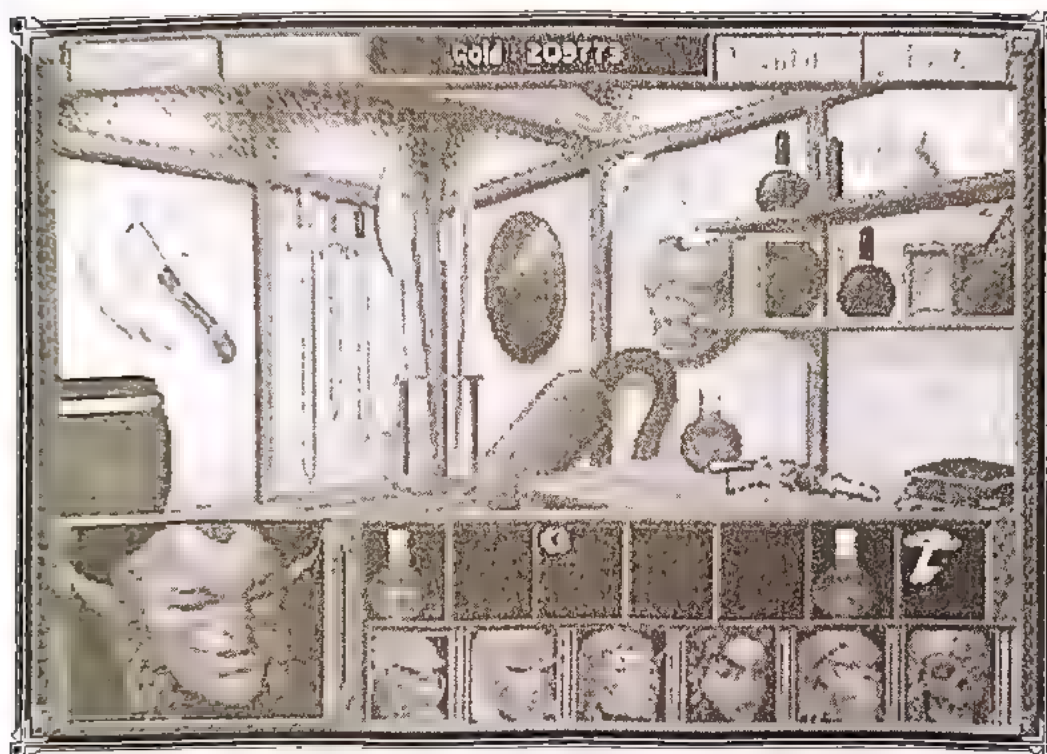


Figure 10-2.  
Floyd's

You'll use Floyd mainly for dumping excess items and identifying interesting ones. Unfortunately, like his brother Gnaw, Floyd's inventory is well south of the party's level of weaponry and armor. By now, you should have three members in full Manite, one in Founder's armor, one in Radiant Plate and one in Ruck's armor.

And Floyd—he's selling plate and mithril, one type of sword, one pole-arm weapon, no shields at all ... What is this, Floyd, some sort of joke? Ha ha, very funny. Bring out the real stuff now, OK?





Actually, Floyd has a specialty: ranged weapons, including the Needler pistol and hand cannon. And check out his Miscellaneous section. He's selling powder kegs! Yes, industrious delvers into levels past, this means just what you think. You can load up on the things, hoof it back to the Upper Caves and systematically blow up every caved-in wall and satisfy yourself that you didn't really need to in the first place.

## **Pretty Boy Floyd**

While you're at Floyd's, try this out: Steal from him. In fact, steal repeatedly until you get caught. Floyd will whine, "Hey! I'm the only one who's allowed to borrow things like that!" before he kicks you out.

Interesting response. Perhaps you should have a look around Floyd's enclosure after you leave the shop, and see if you can turn up anything the shopkeeper may have "borrowed."

Pay special attention to the wall above the bookshelf next to the golem. A gray brick here appears to be out of place. Click on it, and you'll learn that part of the wall is false. Click on the bookshelf and it will slide to the left. Now click on that odd gray brick again, and a panel will open to reveal the weapon Floyd made off with.

This isn't just a neighbor's hedge-trimmer. The huge Auto Crossbow has aspects of a machine gun and a bazooka. It's the most potent ranged weapon we've seen so far, with maximum damage of 21 HP and no minimum strength requirement.

In the Radiant Citadel, you'll learn how Floyd came by this wonder weapon. (A bug prevents you from getting the proper message within the game, but we have the right one in this guide.)

Unfortunately, there really aren't many meaningful opportunities to use ranged weapons in the remainder of the game. But if there were, hey, you'd be loaded for bear.

## **Green River**

When you're done, head back to the room where you pushed the green button. (The door leading to Floyd's will stay open and you won't have to go through this button-pushing schtick every time you visit.)



Head south—not through the crawl space you used earlier, but the full corridor slightly to the west—and then west until you reach a gate. Note the Gate Control Room to the north. This is the nerve center of the south Sewers. Next time you're here, you'll be able to open it.

Use the lever on the wall to open the gate south of the control room. Hop into the sewer beyond and let the current carry you. After a number of turns and stops—some of which will require you to give the party a shove to get it moving—you'll wind up at a huge gate.

Look up and to the right of the gate and you'll see a white button. Click on it. The gate will open, you'll take a header down the shaft—it's lucky you're Level thirtysomething now, isn't it!—and drop off the map entirely. You'll resurface far to the north at another gate on what appears to be the main outflow line for the Citadel's sewer system.

This time, give the party a little shove to get it into the southbound current and ride it to a third gate. Follow the ramp to the east and to the top, open the door with the switch on the wall, and bear northeast until you see a ladder off the east (Figure 10-3). Climb it.



**Figure 10-3.**  
Going up!



## *Your Missions, If You Choose to Accept Them*

At the top, head east until you find an unlocked door to the south with the sign, Maintenance Office. Go inside and take the Storage Areas Key, Maintenance Notes 1 and 2, the Flood Control Note and the Requisition Note. Read all the documents.

Here's a synopsis of what you'll get from them:



- ◆ The engine-room key is missing.
- ◆ The monsters have been working out. They're huge. Something seems to have happened to them.
- ◆ Invisibility potions have washed up down here. There's speculation these would allow workers to avoid the rats.
- ◆ A bridge is down. The generator needs to be repaired in order for it to be restored.
- ◆ Levers can divert the water through flood passages. There's a reference to a worker being washed through the system, and to a schematic diagram of the flood-control gates.
- ◆ There's supposed to be a Manite plate—that's a Manite plate, not Manite plate armor—in Storage Room No. 3. It's somehow involved with restoring a generator.

Is that enough quests for you? <grin> In a nutshell, these are the areas that you need to look into while in the southern half of the Sewers.

### *Cold Storage*

Now that you have the Storage Areas key, you can begin to unlock some of the doors you've been seeing along the way. But, initially, you're in for a disappointment. Storage Room No. 3, just to the west on the north side of the hall, only contains a chest. No Manite plate. (Shucks, there's not even that much dough in the chest.)

The other storage rooms are your best bet. Make your way back to the ladder. Drop to the bottom and continue west. Then head southwest to the point where you entered this complex and then south.

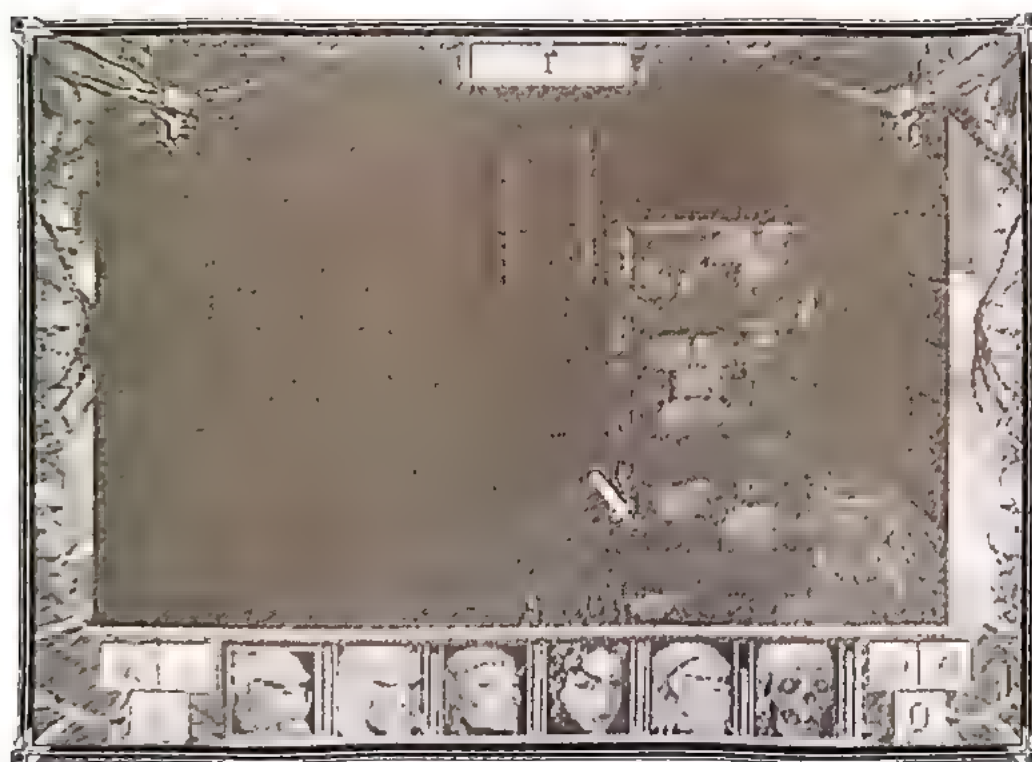




The last exit before the corridor dead-ends leads to Storage Room No. 4. Kill the zombies inside, get the Mana potion from the room to the north, and the Manite plate (which, curiously, looks exactly like the loose brick from the Vanguard Keep dungeons) from the closet to the east.

However, don't bother with the equipment here—or anywhere in this complex. Most of it is junk. The only thing useful you'll turn up is a chest or two.

While you're downstairs, check out map coordinates 8,48,232. You'll find an intriguing view of part of the Citadel's inner apparatus (Figure 10-4). You can jump into the water below and get swept off to the northeast, where you'll find yourself in a large water-filled chamber. Throw the four switches on the walls, then the switch in the room to the east, and you can ride a sluiceway to the west ... and wind up at the foot of the ramp again. However, you have to go through this cistern latter for keeps anyway, so there's no need to bother now.



**Figure 10-4.**

Yes, you can jump in and live to tell about it.

All set? Then let's go find Storage Rooms No. 1 and No. 2. If you explored the area around where you entered the Sewers, you probably tried to get into at least one of them. The only way back to the starting area is the four sunken, switch-operated gates at the south side and east end of the upstairs corridor. (You can try the sewer again, but you won't be able to swim against the current. After all, you're a fighter, not a salmon.) Ultimately, any of the doors will do, but the most direct route is through the gate in the southeast corner.



You'll drop into a small Ooze Wurm lair that runs east and west. (This creature is similar to the Carrion Worm.) Bear east, then northeast to find Storage Area No. 2. Inside, get the Flood Control Room Key and a Mana potion. Exit as you entered and make your way south, west and north to Storage Area No. 1. Here you'll find a Manite chain coif and the Old Sewers Bridge Key.

OK, you've got the missions and the keys, and you more or less have the run of the place. What should you do first? Make finding the Engine Room Key your first priority.

## **Don't Touch That!**

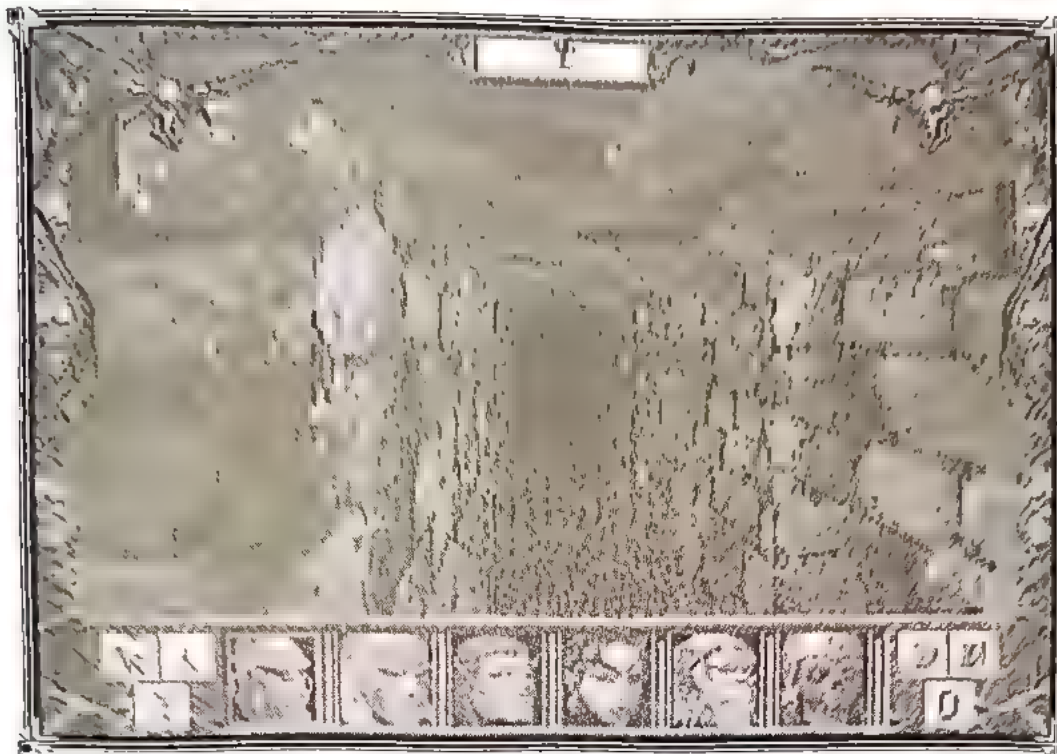
From Storage Area No. 1, head south and west, and enter the Gate Control Room. Wow: Five levers on the south and west walls, six indicators, and a system schematic on the north wall, and you don't have a clue what to do with any of it.

The basic operating rule here should be "hands off." If you want to experiment, save your game first. There are a lot of combinations of levers. Two of them are required to complete the Sewers, and at least one combination has an intriguing result, which we'll look at a little later in the chapter.

Right now, you only have to do one thing: Throw the left lever on the west wall and the right lever on the south wall. Notice how the indicator at the lower left part of the schematic changes from white (closed) to blue (open)? Leave everything else untouched. Leave the room, head south, and enter the sewer again.

## **The Engine Room Key**

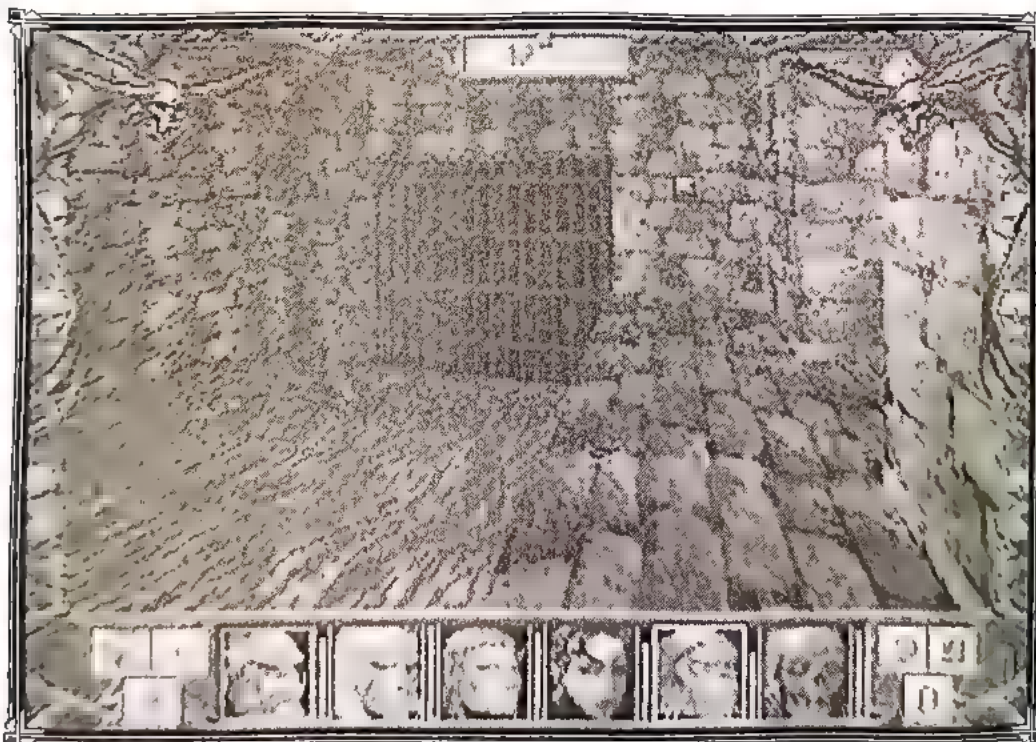
You definitely changed something when you hit those levers: The river's course this time is different. You'll be deposited on a platform a short distance from where you entered the water. Throw the switch on the north wall, head north and west, and return to the water. This will bring you, at great speed (and *uphill* over some stretches) to another platform (Figure 10-5). Fall off it to the west, and the current will carry you down to a huge gate.



**Figure 10-5.**

I heard they filmed some of "The Fugitive" in here ...

Last time you were here, you punched the white button north of the gate to open the gate. Don't do that this time. Instead, swim upstream and north as far as possible, and then jump up on the catwalk to the north (Figure 10-6).



**Figure 10-6.**

The door to the right leads to the Engine Room Key.



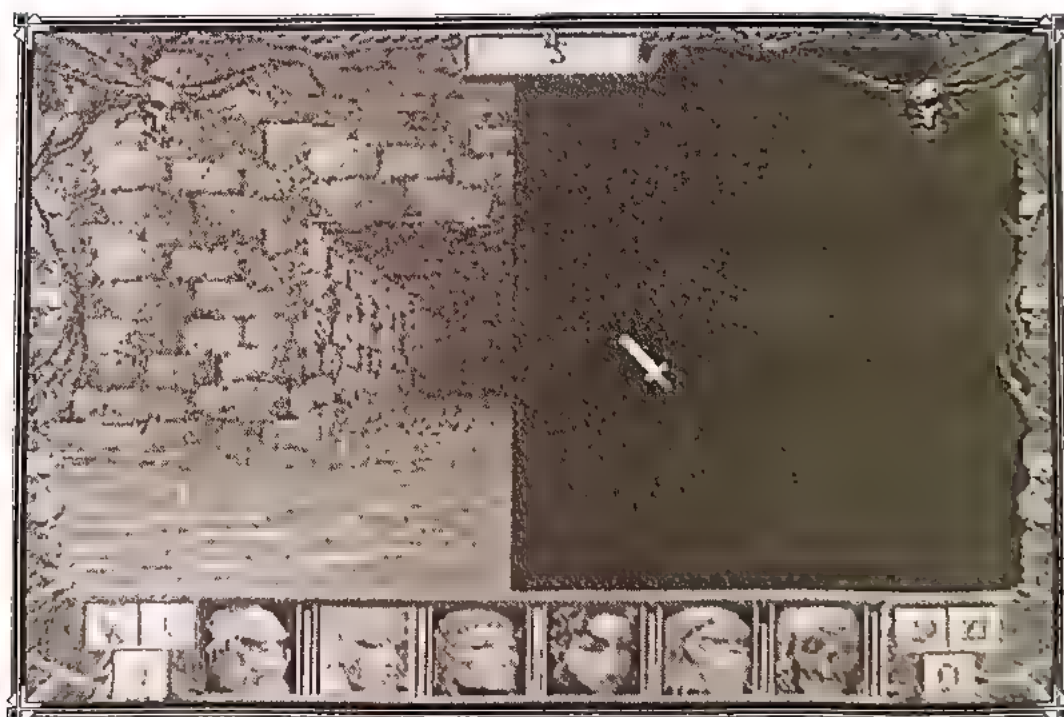


The door to the north should be open. Enter this little maze, kill off the rats, and get the chest from the northeast corner. Follow the passage in the northwest corner. It will loop around to the south. Push the button in the south wall at the end of the hall. Backtrack to the north and take the passage to the west. Behind the door at the hall's end is the Engine Room Key, Manite leg armor and a skeleton (the kind that just lies there).

What's that you say? You can't get past the skeleton to get the armor? That could be a problem. Try jumping over the skeleton from a crouched position. There you go.

Return to the catwalk and press the button to open the gate. Jump back in the water and allow it to carry you down to another gate. Here's another little *Thunderscape* quirk: You can open the gate to the west at this point and effectively walk out of the game into utter blackness (Figure 10-7). Not recommended. Once you leave, you can't come back without restoring a saved game.

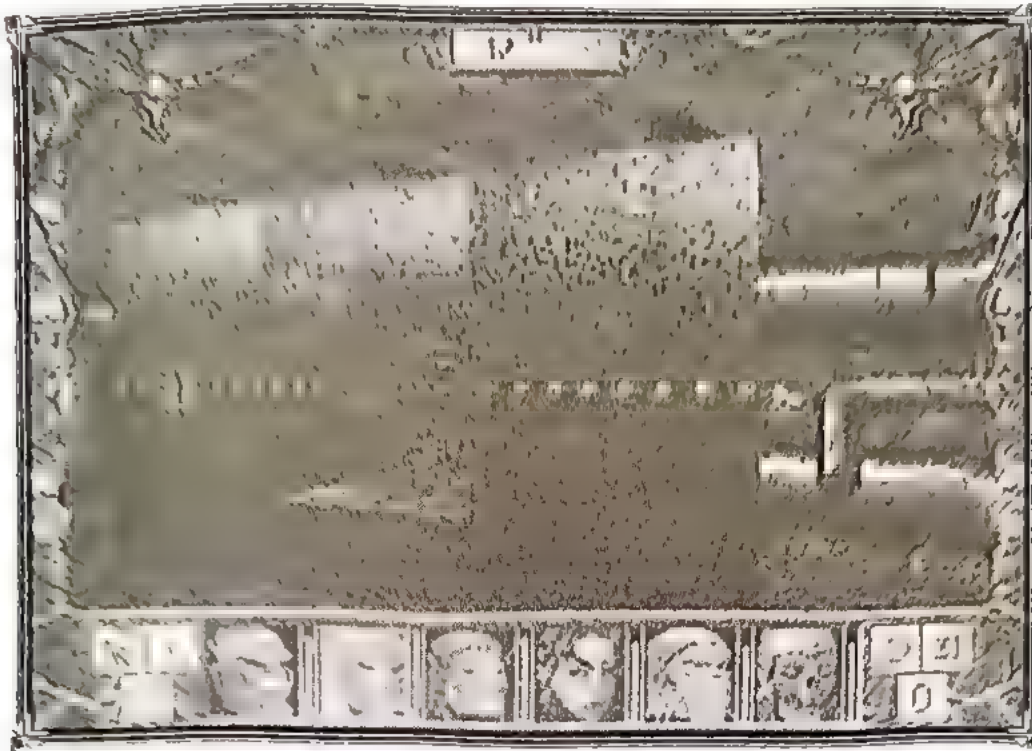
**Figure 10-7.**  
The darkness at the  
edge of town



Instead, give the party a nudge down the river branch to the south. This puts you back at the storage-area complex. Climb to the second floor, bear east, and use the same southeastern exit you used last time. Bear east, southeast, and west to find the Engine Room.



Take the Bridge Key (it's just to the left of the generator), click the Manile plate on the machine (Figure 10-8), and throw the switch. The access door will close, and the generator will begin to run. Well done!



**Figure 10-8.** Slap the metal plate on this generator and start 'er up, or your bridge will be all wet.

## Bridge Work

Woof! That was some long quest! The next one—restoring the bridge to the north Sewers—is significantly shorter. Return to the Gate Control Room. Reset the levers you moved, and then throw the left switch on the both the south and west walls, and re-enter the sewer to the south.

After a long ride, you'll be dumped into a large central cistern. (It's the same one you visited earlier if you jumped into the sewers from the scenic overlook at the storage-area complex.) Climb the ramp at its east end and kill the rats, who otherwise are likely to pester you as you go about your work. Return to the cistern and throw all four switches (two on the western wall and one each on each on the western parts of the north and south walls).

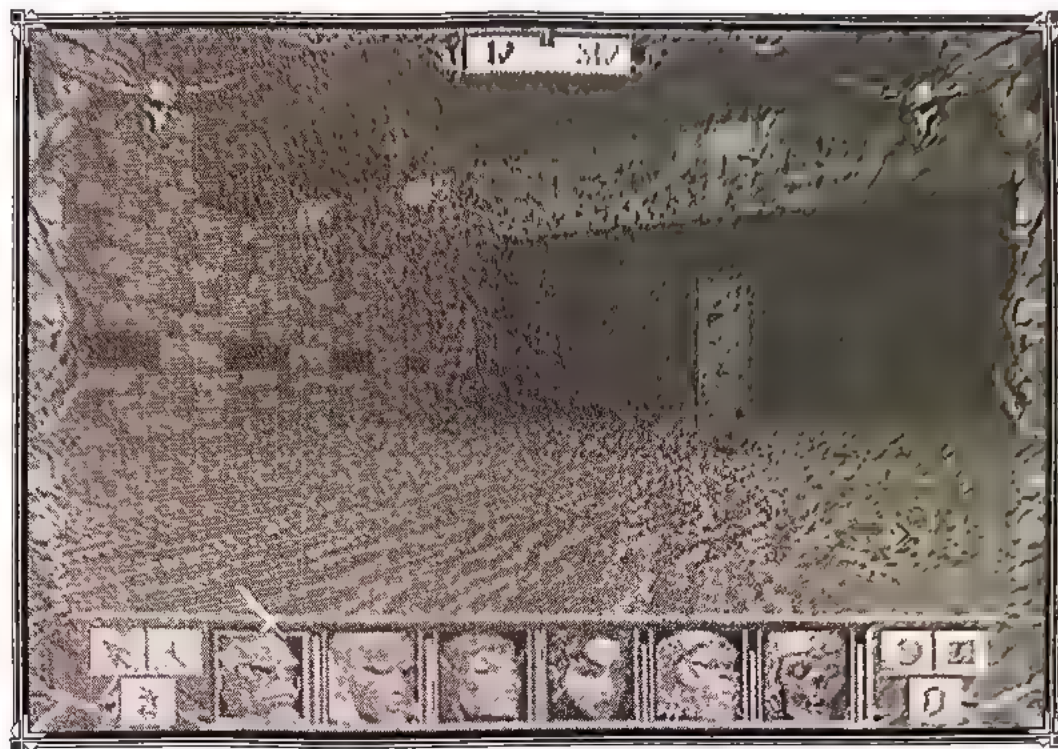
Go back to the room to the east and throw the switch at the right to open the floodgates. Then use the Bridge Key in the keyhole to the left and return to the cistern. If you hurry, you can watch the support columns



rising from the water (Figures 10-9). Ride the current down to the gate, and follow your usual path back through the storage-area complex.

**Figure 10-9.**

The bridge is coming together nicely.



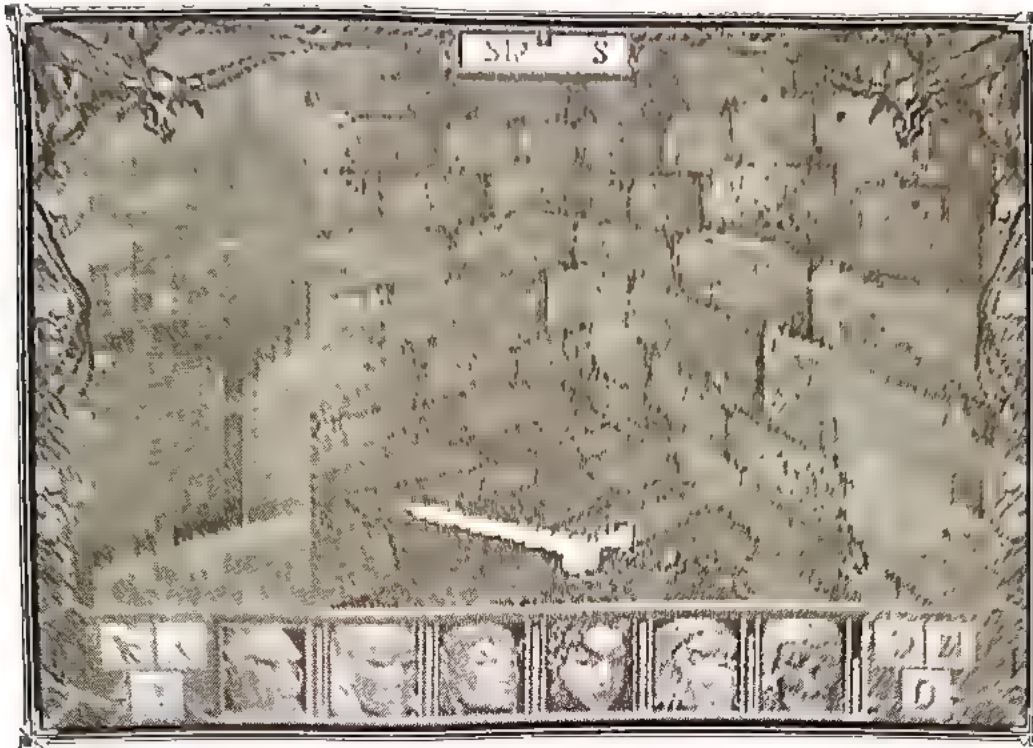
However, this time, bear north up the ramp in the middle of the upstairs hall. Here's your bridge! Open the gates, cross over the span, and open the gates on the other side.

### *Did You Know About ...*

At this point, the action moves to the northern section of the Sewers. There's really no reason to come back south across the bridge (although you can). So while you're still in the south Sewers, here are some things you may want to check out (and avoid).

- ◆ Once you've found the Engine Room Key and activated the bridge, you can do what you like in the Gate Control Room. And, in fact, there's one thing you can do in it that you'll definitely like! There's a decent sword—the poison-laced *Venom*, which adds 30 to the user's Sword skill (Figure 10-10)—hidden away in an alcove at the west end of the sewers.





**Figure 10-10.**

This poisonous sword is buried in a backwater in the flood-control system.

To reach it, reset the levels and throw the middle and right levers on the control room's west wall. Head south for your third swim. The sewer will drop you off at just west of a platform. Jump up on it, throw the switch on the south wall, and jump back in the water, but to the south.

You'll soon wash up beside another platform. Walk into the alcove to the west and grab the sword. Throw the switch in the alcove to the north and return to the water. You'll be washed into the central cistern, out the gate, and back to your favorite ramp.

- ◆ Don't bother searching for the Invisibility potions mentioned in the Maintenance Note. They didn't make it into the final game. There were supposed to be two—in Storage Areas No. 2 and No. 4—but Mana potions were substituted for them instead.
- ◆ We never do get a coherent explanation for the huge monsters, but perhaps we shouldn't expect improvement on the explanation we already have. (Blame it on the Nocturnals.) The sewer workers don't seem to be well plugged-in. The notes offer only a vague suggestion of something amiss topside.
- ◆ There are a couple of minor areas we didn't explore fully. For instance, we used only one of the four sunken stairways that lead away from the second-floor corridor in the storage-area complex.



The three southern stairs all drop into a sinuous east-west trench that develops character as you follow it west. The layout suggests this was once a major thoroughfare, and that perhaps there was once a bridge where the hall now ends in a watery chasm. This is the eastern prospect you glimpsed from the lower story of the storage-area complex earlier in the level.

South of the middle of the three south exits, there's a north-south passage and, at its end, a trench. The trench feeds directly into the sewer's central cistern.

The northeast stairs, on the other hand, lead to a small room with two exits which can be negotiated only on hands-and-knees. The northwestern ones take you back to the corridor that leads south to the area where you entered the Sewers. The southeastern ones will take you to a chest and three potions.

- ◆ Someone has set a rat trap in the southeast corner of the map. To set it off, use the secret eastern exit from Floyd's—hit the button on the north side of the easternmost crate—and bear north up the hall into a square room. The gate to north and south will close and ones to the east and west will open, releasing sewer rats. Oooo. Like you're really frightened of sewer rats.



## *North Sewers*

OK, back to the business at hand. An immediate visit to the Maintenance Office, just northeast of the bridge, is called for. Here you'll find the Old Gates Key, a chest of medical potions, and three more documents: "Old Maint. Note (1 and 2)" and "Aux. Passage Note." Presumably, these all date from before the Nocturnal occupation, but still make for interesting reading. There's reference to an alternate route into the Citadel and the switches that operate it, and flooding and procedures to stop it. (It also explains why so many gates in this area are locked.)

## *Here Comes the Flood*

You can now get into the rooms down that steep passage to the west. The southern of the two holds the Flooded Area Key 1. (Get Flood Area Key 2 from the area just north of the bridge.)



As for the northern room—well, save your game, follow the two ramps down to the west and see for yourself. The whole area is flooding! The brownish muck is almost halfway up the doors. If there was anything in here to find, it belongs to the ages now.

Or does it? See what you can do. At the bottom of the ramp, head northwest, west, and then south into the Flood Control Room. It's the same story here: The water's rising fast. And you're trapped. The door has closed behind you and can't be opened for love or money.

Your job: Quickly find and hit the eight switches that open the valves, and then activate a ninth switch to purge the system. Fail, and the whole party dies.

There's no special order to the first eight switches, but the ninth—beside a sign in an alcove just west from where you enter the room—has to be last. What does make things awkward, however, is the fact that the party must perform at least some of this quest in a squat—that's how the game deals with the party being in water—and you'll find yourself looking up at switches from a toddler's point of view.

The best way to play this is simply to have a few dry runs (so to speak!) to locate all the switches and then do it for real. Here's run-through of a quick route:

- 1) Hit the switch immediately on your right as you come in (one switch).
- 2) Swing around the corner to the west and hit the switches on each side of the entrance (three).
- 3) Head east back into the main room and smack the switch on the north wall (four).
- 4) Wheel south and hit the switch on the west wall (5) and the two on the south wall (seven).
- 5) Turn west into the alcove and hit the switch here (eight).
- 6) Hurry north, duck into the alcove east of the exit and hit the switch on the south wall to purge the system (nine).

Once you're finished, you can leave the room and open the other doors in the area. You're not going to get rich doing it, but you will find the Water Grate Key in a room just southwest of the exit ramp.





## *Gridlock*

Now you can open the gate northeast of the bridge. Follow this passage east to a gridwork of intersecting—and ultimately blocked—passages that comprise the northeastern corner of the Sewers.

Don't bother exploring them, right now, it's just a lot of dead-ends. Bear north at the first intersection, east again at the locked gate, and throw the switch you'll find on the southern wall. Take a step backward, head north, west and north again, and hit the switch you'll find there. This will clear a path through the south and east sides of the maze to a door at map coordinates 61,12,508.

## *Buttons, Levers and Other Triumphs of the Modern Age*

The remainder of the Sewers path is cast along these same button-pushing lines, as you release the triggers concealing the Auxiliary Passage into the Radiant Citadel. Beyond the door, head west. At the branch in the corridor, bear south and west. Along the way, hit the green button at 59,12,508 and the white button in an alcove at 46,12,508. (While you're out this way, pick the lock on the gate at the far western tip of this passage and get the Magic Spear.)

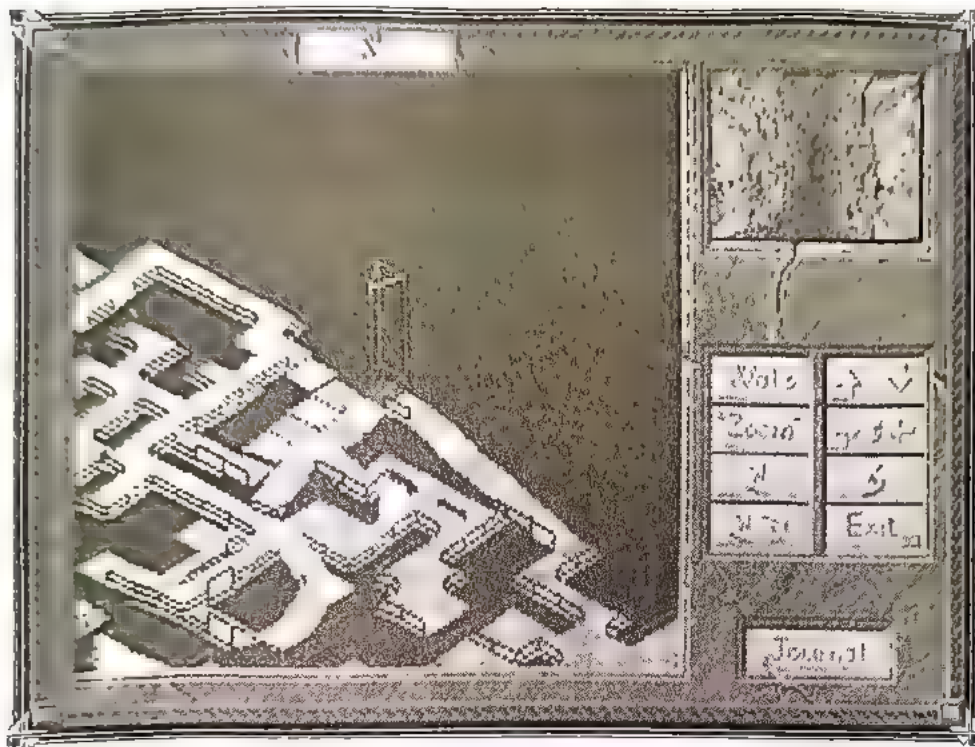
Finally, head back to the east. On the way, follow the second passage to the north all the way to the end and pull the lever that has appeared at 44,12,508. When you return to the fork in the corridor where you turned south earlier, bear north. Keep heading north until you reach the far northeast corner of the map.

It's here, finally, at 59,2,508, where the passage bends toward the west, that the party enters the home stretch in its run toward the Radiant Citadel. Stay to the north, and you'll eventually find yourself climbing a long, steep ramp.



## A-mazing Stairways

Here, the party becomes an unwilling participant in an Escher-like tableau of criss-crossing staircases (Figure 10-11). The following is the most direct course through the maze to the exit, but it's not the only one. The curious can find low-grade equipment, chests and potions sequestered here. (It's worth a look, anyway. Some of the goodies are creatively concealed.)



**Figure 10-11.**  
The party's position  
at the top of the  
ramp

From the top of the ramp, follow the southern passage as it corkscrews around to a "T" intersection at 34,1,643. Bear west here and follow this hall to another "T" junction. Take a southern passage here and follow it through another corkscrew twist to a three-way intersection at 18,6,563. In a series of short moves, bear south, east and south to another three-way junction at 19,9,563.

Follow the east passage at another "T" at 17,13,643 and, at the next junction, follow the south passage to a lever. (All right! Something that isn't a hall with a grubby floor.) Pull it.



Go back to the "T" intersection. This time, bear north and north again at the intersection at the bottom of the ramp. Push the lever in the alcove to the west (Figure 10-12). Keep following the passage north, through another corkscrew, and throw the lever at the end.

**Figure 10-12.**

Critters: The end of the level must be near.



## Endgame

Throwing this lever opens the gate west of the previous lever. Retrace your steps, enter the dank lair to the west and kill off the Ooze Wurms you'll find here. Bear south and head west at its southern end. Put the party in a crouch and crawl through the hole in the western wall to a crypt.

Be patient. You're close to being done. But your first instinct may be that you've just reached a fancier grade of dead-end. After all, the room has no visible exits and the two sarcophaguses here are just passive stone.

Hold tight. In fact, there are three doors off this room. Remember the illusionary walls in the Vanguard Keep dungeon? They're back. Step into the northern of the two alcoves in the west wall, turn north, and walk into the wall. You'll find a Banish Spellbook hidden here. Stand between the two sarcophaguses and face south, and then walk into this wall and you'll find a pair of potions (Figure 10-13).



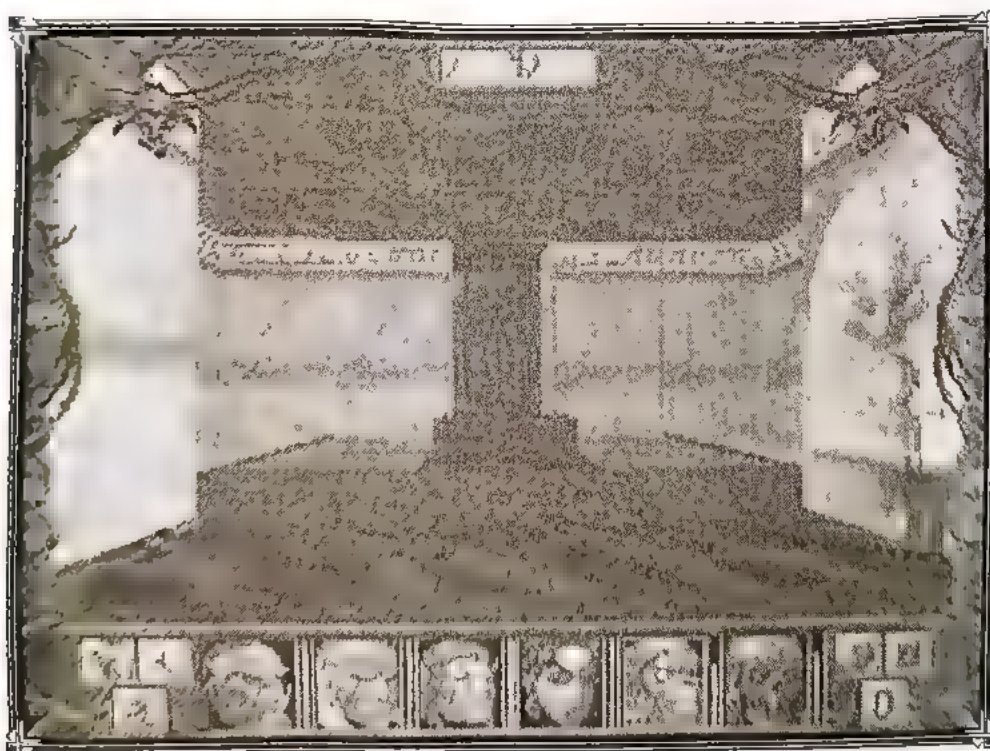


**Figure 10-13.**  
Hair of the Ooze  
Wurm that bit you

Finally, turn around and face north and walk between the sarcophagi again into the north wall. This leads to a corridor, an ascending ramp, and a bright chamber with the skull-and-sword symbol you'll recall from Karegh-Konan (Figure 10-14).

This time, the skull appears to be bleeding.

Good sign! I don't *think* so. Exit via the door to the west.  
The Radiant Citadel awaits.



**Figure 10-14.**  
The exit, and an  
ill-omen





## Operation: Citadel

*The party finds an unconventional route into the Citadel, reads up a storm, teleports up a hurricane, frees and enlists another victim of the Nocturnals, and takes on Anthrax on his own turf.*

This was a good plan. The party emerges from the Sewers in the northwest corner of the Radiant Citadel's outer moat without incident. No one seems to take any special notice of your arrival—you're well out of the way here—save for an inquisitive Ooze Wurm or two, drawn by the corrupt scent of the sewers. And they don't stay inquisitive for very long.

Your basic task here is simple: to penetrate to the fourth level of the fortress and to confront and destroy the evil that besieged Aden.

"Well, thank you very much for nothing, Mr. Strategy Guide Man." Yeah, I suppose you could have guessed that much back in Skelon's Gorge. However, the details of how it's accomplished vary a good deal from level to level. The first is consumed with minutia—building the outer rim of a





jigsaw puzzle but not suggesting the whole picture. The second is more a puzzle level. And the third is consumed in part with puzzles—one of them is a mind-blower—and in part with assembling the raw materials necessary to complete the high-profile electrician's job you've taken on.

## Citadel Level One

### The Moat

Check out this area before you do anything anywhere. True, a lot of the equipment you find in alcoves off this watery trench will seem inadequate—a trident here, mithril plate leggings there—but one unique item does exist.

When you leave the Sewers, head west and south. You'll eventually reach the entrance to an access tunnel. Follow it east and, when it branches, east again. At the end of the passage, you'll find a skeleton—some poor soul who crawled in here to die during the Nocturnal attack, no doubt—and two pieces of equipment. One is the Spetum, a conventional pole-arm weapon, and the other, almost invisible in the shadows, is a ranged weapon called a Spore Launcher (Figure 11-1).

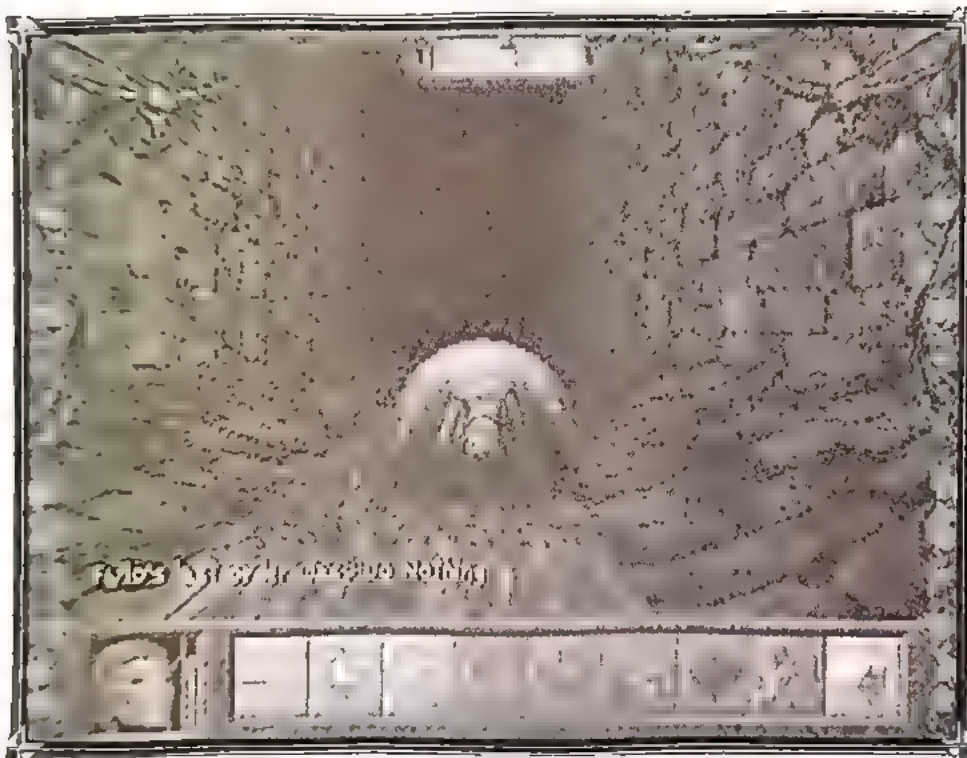
**Figure 11-1.**  
The Spore Launcher





What the ... A failed experiment! A primitive bio-weapon! No idea. The manual says it has a spell effect, but this steam-powered weapon had no evident impact in combat when I experimented with it. And if you haul it back to Floyd's for identification, it turns out that its maximum damage (and required minimum strength to use) is zero. (This appears to be the residue of a game element that was never fully implemented. At one point, SSI planned to include a range of different spore ammunition in the game.

You'll also have to deal with (i.e. wipe out) the large colony of Ooze Wurms that lives in the moat (Figure 11-2). For one thing, they're constantly in the way—always wanting to fight when you've got your mind set on something else. For another, it's a fine way to build extra levels before you start in on the big boys.



**Figure 11-2.**  
Bye-bye, squishy!

Then again, you will find that, as in some other areas like the Lower Caves, the party gains levels *extremely* fast in the Citadel—sometimes even from combat to combat.

The other thing interesting about this region is that, because it's almost totally empty, it provides a sense of how large a *Thunderscape* level really is. There's only one other spot in the game where you can run the full length or width of a level without interruption. (Any guesses? It's the Dwarven Highway at the north end of the East Mines.)



## 1 Hear You Knockin'

There are two routes into the Citadel. You can simply stroll in the front door. Or you can sneak in. We'll detail both paths, but the one we'll follow is the sneaky approach, as it's a little shorter ... and decidedly easier.

### *The Avon Lady Approach*

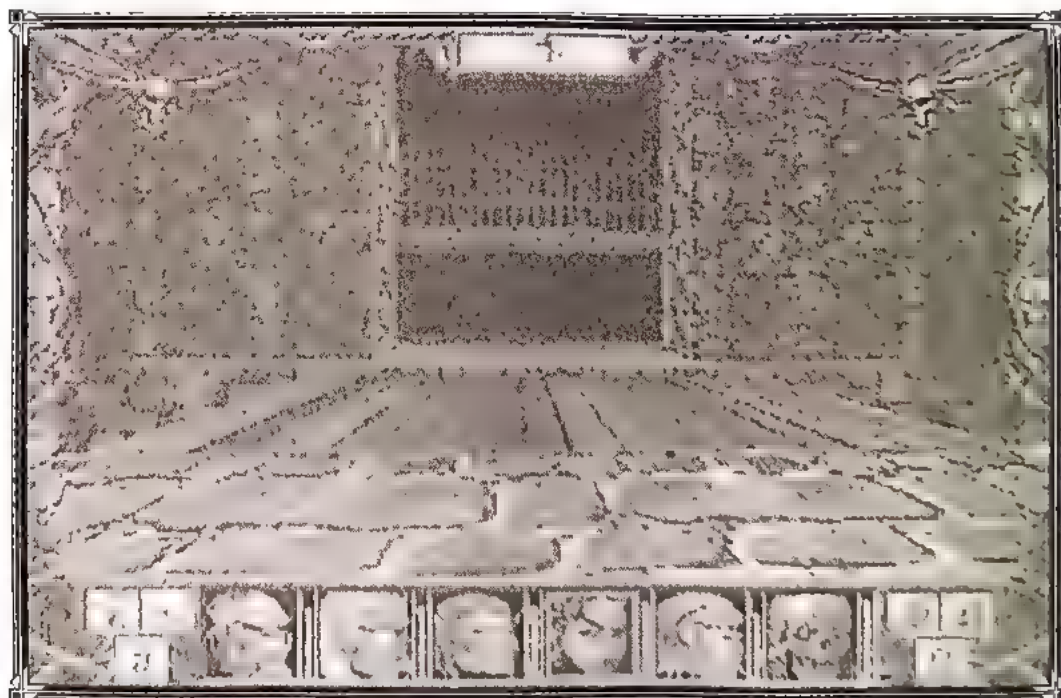
To reach the front door, head to the southeast corner of the moat, jump up on the platform, climb the stairs and follow the parapet to the front gates. (You'll learn that they've been sealed. Lucky you came in through the basement, eh!)

Cross the bridge to the north (Figure 11-3) and kill the Shadow Demon "greeter"—a blue Smoke Demon sans spells, but with a rogue's gift for backstabbing. Head north, wheel around, and use ranged weapons to blast the other Shadow Demons who have gathered on the parapet above the gate. (You'll probably only be able to knock off two or three before they disperse, and will have to fight the others hand-to-hand later.)



**Figure 11-3.**

This is the bridge into the Radiant Citadel.



Further north, you'll see that the bridge that crosses the inner moat has been retracted and the control switch is frozen. You'll have to find a way to free it.





Here begins the fun. That control switch is activated by two additional switches found in towers to the east and west. Each tower is guarded by either one or two Shadow Demons and a gargoyle. (Gargoyles are tough little numbers. They only have 100 HP, but are resistant to everything except Death attacks. At higher difficulty levels, you'll spend round after round just trying to hit them.)

Enter the west tower by the door in the west wall. Kill the defenders and throw the switch in the second story's northwest corner. The document that you'll find here, "Tower Orders," is unrevealing. Its purpose seems simply to establish that, yes, there is a way to open the bridge.

There's a funny thing about the east tower: It doesn't have a door. The only way to reach its interior is to jump on top of one of the western tower's walls, leap to the surrounding parapet, follow the parapet east, and then jump from the parapet into the open top floor of the east tower. When you get there, descend the stairs, kill the defenders, and throw the switch (also in the northwest corner). Head topside again, jump over the tower wall, and activate the bridge. Cross over, and you'll hear from Tophet on a presence high in the fortress. Nocturnals, here comes trouble!

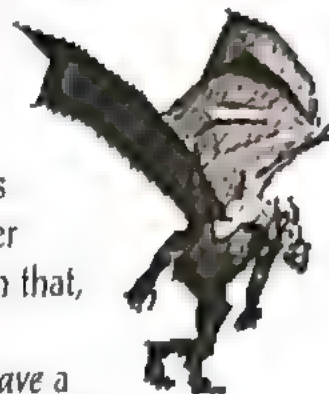
The thing is, there's trouble inside, too. You may not even get to open the door: A Shadow Demon may do it for you. It's followed by an even tougher version of the gargoyle from the gate towers—a sort of greater gargoyle with 250 HP. And two more Shadow Demons are behind it. And there are flickerings of the monsters to come in the shadows behind them.

Yikes. Is it too late to make peace?

You'll probably survive these battles to explore the Citadel proper, but the forward approach seems to bring the whole weight of the occupying army down on your head. There's got to be a better way.

### The Doggy Door Approach

There is. Try the southeast corner. This section of the Citadel has some of the ambiance of the Sewers: A little river flows through these stony chambers—probably providing water to the kitchen. You can enter this area at the four points where the water drains into the moat.





The best entrance to use is the northernmost drain on the east side of Citadel. Follow the stream south, west, north to a locked gate, just a touch south and west again. The current is stiff, and you'll have to guard against being washed out again, but a little perseverance will take you to a darkened platform at 51,50,127. The northern wall is a secret door. Open it, and you're in like Flynn.

### *Something's in the Kitchen with Dinah*

Hey, it is the kitchen! You arrive in the cold storage locker. The locked east door takes you into the kitchen proper. Whatever's for dinner sure smells disgusting, and no wonder: The cookbook, *Kitchen Recipes*, lists some new and unappetizing ingredients. It sounds as though when the Nocturnals have you for dinner, they have *you* for dinner.

Well, let's see what's cooking. The two doors to the north lead to a former banquet hall—Ooze Wurm heaven—and entry into the nondescript room beyond the hall means combat with two lesser Gargoyles.



None of this is especially meaningful in terms of the game. But further north, in an oblong chamber with a tarnished regal disposition, look very closely at the floor close to the middle of the northern wall. That's the Radiant Sceptre, looking almost like part of the wall, and it will open up an important cache and an Easter Egg later in the level. Press north a little more and you can look out a window into the north moat.

However, that's about all you can do here. Return to the kitchen and exit into the corridor via the double doors to the west. To the south you'll find a lesser gargoyle, which you'll have to fight, and barrels with disgusting contents. You can examine the contents—a rarity for *Thunderscape*, which usually plays "hands-off" with barrels. However, we're headed north (Figure 11-4). The first door to the left opens into a pleasant wood-paneled room where you'll find the Chef's Key, which opens the gate to the stream area at the south end of the kitchen.



Continue north up the corridor and climb the stairs you find to the west. This room is full of Shadow Demons and lesser Gargoyles, and you'll probably take some serious damage before the battle ends. When it's over, open your eyes again and press the blue button to the left of the bookcase. The shelves will slide back and you can help yourself to a Manite great helm and Radiant plate chest armor.





Figure 11-4.

^ deserted hallway  
on Radiant Citadel  
Level One

Good stuff. But we're already beginning to exhaust the resources of this hallway. Hang on a bit longer, though, because two doors up the hall to the west is a room that will heal you and make you rich. Well, the room itself is *empty*, and you're *already* rich, but the secret room to the east holds a chest of medical supplies, a Major Heal potion and 6,000 GP.

OK, you're relatively healthy, you're better armored, and you know you'll politely decline the Nocturnals' dinner invitations. But what happened in the Citadel?

In the document "Advisor's Note," which you'll find in the next room up the hall, you'll begin to get an inkling. The Powers That Were seem to have had too much confidence in the integrity of Skelon's Shield. The advisor assumes that the Nocturnals marching on Skelon's Pass don't know about the barrier. But he has enough horse sense to recommend that the Citadel be closed and that certain items be removed to the vault and treasury. (Both of these spots appear to turn up later in the level.)

You can't go any further up the hall: Locked gates to the north and south of this corridor block access to the western parts of the level. There is a way around the gates, though. The chamber with the blue button has a western exit.

Use it. Then head south and west, and south down the ramp to an east-west hall. At the bottom, enter the room to the south, descend the stairs at the east end, and throw the lever at the downstairs room's west end. (This opens the blocking gates.)





Back in the hall again, head west, across the central junction, and then take the second northern corridor and climb the ramp. At the top, you should find a secret door in the east wall. The super-heated room at the bottom of the passage is the Citadel treasury. You'll find about 5,200 GP and random items in chests at the southern end of the room.

Seems kind of light for a treasury, doesn't it! Are you missing something in here?

That's quite possible. Remember the flight of stairs in the Karegh-Konan entryway! It had a texture that made it difficult to distinguish from the walls around it. A similar optical illusion is at work here to make the treasury look like a single closed room.

To puncture the illusion, walk over to the northwest corner, where a writing desk appears to be sticking out of the wall, and turn south.

From this perspective, you'll immediately see a large rectangular hole in the ceiling and a darkened room immediately above this one. Jump up on the "writing desk," then turn north and jump up on a second, hard-to-see step and use it as a springboard into the room itself.

It's even hotter here than below. Like the western door downstairs, both of the exits have been warped shut by the temperature, and the party will eventually begin to take damage.

So be quick about your business here: Head over to the pedestal at the south side of the room and get the Radiant Bow, then drop down to the lower level again.

This bow is *Thunderscape's* ultimate ranged weapon. It not only adds 30 points to the user's Bow skill, but also can inflict a total of up to 33 HP worth of impale and electricity damage per hit.

A southern exit takes you back up to the west side of the corridor you just left. Continue north to a wooden door.

The room beyond smells of chemicals, and broken glass is strewn across the floor. That suggests this was an alchemist's lab, and, sure enough, if you pop into the room to the west, you'll find potions and the document "Wizard's Note."

Oddly, the note in the game is a duplicate of "Dwarven Hwy Desc." from *The West Mines*. It is *supposed* to read:

*"Something must be done about Floyd! I've just received word that he's 'borrowed' the Auto Crossbow from the weapons stores. Knowing him, he's hidden it in the same false wall that he always hides things in. I'll have to send a knight down there to recover it. I don't know why the Avatar puts up with that little green menace."*



Well, at least you were able to deliver on the wizard's promise. A knight did recover it.

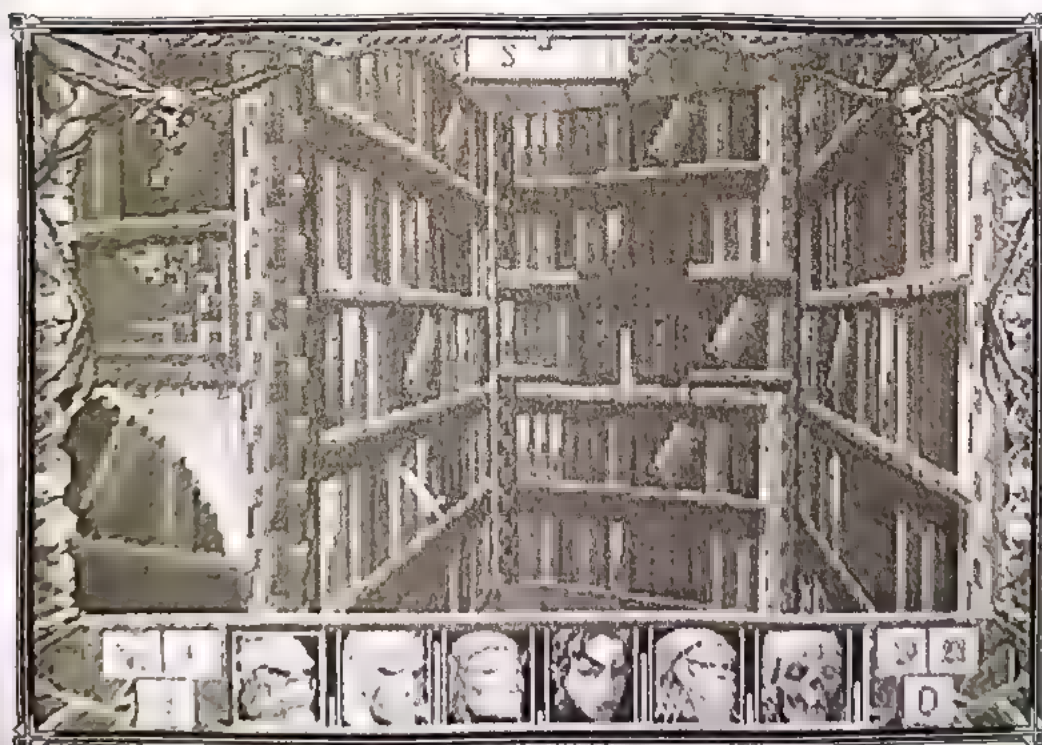
The east wall of the lab conceals a secret door. When you cross over the threshold, the party will report an odd sensation—a feeling of something waiting and watching.

That's a clue to be careful. *Stay out of the Pentagram.* If you don't, the presence will solidify and you'll find yourself in combat. Check the south wall for a secret door. Get the Strength potion and Breathe Fire and Acid Arrow scrolls.

Hmmm. It looked as though we were onto something there for a moment. Nothing quite seems to coalesce so far in this level. You find scraps of info, inventory items, money, suggestions of the savage bent of the Nocturnals, but so far, it's as though we're in a distant orbit around the real subject.

That's about to change. Return to the hallway and head west down the ramp. You'll find a large library—the game designers' seem to love 'em—and a sizable number of Shadow Demons (who will continue to appear periodically and do vaudeville dance steps). Kill them, and then explore. You can click on the shelves to learn about their contents. Most of the books are dull, blank, or simply mundane. No oddities or skill enhancers here.

But wait: The shelf closest to the west wall, in the southernmost row, recedes when you touch it, and a switch will appear when you step into the alcove (Figure 11-5). Throw the switch. Stone blocks will rise from the



**Figure 11-5.**  
This library shelf  
conceals a hidden  
switch.



library floor. Climb the stairs at the south end of the room and check out the second floor of the library. In the northernmost ranks of shelves, push in the green book. A switch will appear high in the west wall.

Now, hop down to the lower level and climb the blocks, using them as stepping stones to the north, west, south, and northeast, and hit the switch from the top block.

This will open a stairway under the pentagram at the north end of the room. It descends into a corridor lined with dust-coated books that ends in two teleporters. The southern one zaps the party into a hidden library high above the rest of the level.

You can learn a little more about this place, later in the level, from the document "Library Scroll" (found in one of the rooms off the mezzanine of the throne room's antechamber). This library is what you wished the library downstairs had been. Check all the shelves. Many of the books seem to have some relevance to your quest. You'll learn about:

- ◆ The shield generators. They're on the third floor of the citadel, but the switch to reactivate the shield is on the fourth.
- ◆ The use of mirrors to separate a creature into conflicting parts.
- ◆ The merits of going to the root of a problem, rather than attacking the symptoms (a pretty emphatic clue about laying off the minions and looking for Big Bad Guy).
- ◆ That Nocturnals are naturally disorganized and impulsive. (The implication is that they're now under the influence of some greater power.)



Well, duh! You'll find the Stair Gate Key on a table in the northeast corner, and a Disintegrate Spellbook on a shelf just southwest of the table. Use the western teleporter to return to the corridor beneath the pentagram. Leave the library by the double doors in the southwest corner and follow them down to the east-west corridor.

You can also go farther south than just the intersecting corridor. You'll have to fight off two lesser Cargoyles in first room to the east. But through the second door—to the Stables—is a major deal with a whole pack of Shadow Demons (Figure 11-6). You'll need spells to get through this unbloodied.







**Figure 11-6.**  
The Shadow  
Demons do their  
number.

The blood on the walls makes it pretty clear what happened. Poor horses. Poor Stablemaster, too. You can read her ruminations in the Stablemaster Note found in the office to the south.

By now, we've covered everything but the throne room and its connecting chambers. You can do that on the way to the stairs leading up to the second level. Head north to the east-west corridor. Bear east and then up the ramp in the first hallway to the north. This puts you on the west side of the mezzanine of the throne room's antechamber.

It's a good place to be, and you'll find some odd items and cash up there to keep you occupied. On the other hand, I don't recommend wandering around the floor of the antechamber itself. It seems to unleash a whole horde of Shadow Demons. You'll probably prevail, but sometimes winning isn't as important as maintaining the hit-point status quo.

Move quickly north, east, and north into the throne room. It's seen better days. The throne now looks more like an electric chair, but it has a touch of the old magic. Once you've cleared out any Gargoyles and demons, click the Radiant Sceptre on the throne to open up the vault behind the west wall.

Here you'll find a Radiant plate helm, something over 5,000 G/P, and *A Knight's Treatise*. This book improves a character's Sword and Shield skills by 25 points each.





And that's that. Cross the room and continue east until you reach a set of stairs locked off behind a gate. Unlock the gate and climb the stairs. Halfway up, you'll be notified by disk access that you're entering Level Two.

## *Skull-diggery*

Before you get busy upstairs, however, there's one little side trip you might want to consider. There's a nice Easter Egg on the first level that makes other portions of the game much more accessible.

Do you recall seeing a Giant Skull centerpiece in the room just south of the throne room's antechamber? Return to it, and try to click on it.

The first time you encounter the skull, you'll get a message that its presence in this courtyard is strange, but that it appears to have been there for a while. (In other words, it pre-dates the Nocturnal occupation.)

Further clicks of the mouse on the skull produce no additional messages. But the pointer is shaped like a *hand* when it is over the skull—a sure sign that there must be some way to interact with it. You just need the right object.

Maybe the Reaper? After all, you used it for triggering the scythe to activate teleport skulls back in Vanguard Keep Towers. Nope, it won't work here. But now you have an item—the Radiant Sceptre—that will.

If you've been cursing the rigors of traveling back to previously cleared dungeons, prepare to become just inordinately pleased with yourself! This is no ordinary teleport skull. It gives you access to multiple destinations. You can zap to:

- ◆ The Hall of Heroes in the Catacombs,
- ◆ The inner circle of the Vanguard Keep Towers,
- ◆ The teleport pad in Skelon's Gorge (which here is called "the Docks").

It is not really geared for convenience. The zap to the Catacombs is one-way only. You can't return directly to the Citadel from Vanguard Keep, but you can zap from there to Skelon's Gorge. And using the sceptre on the Skelon's Gorge skull now allows you to ride that formerly dead-end teleport to either the Keep or the Citadel.

Also on the destination menu are the Shield Generator on the Citadel's third level and the Troll Caves. The skull can't send you to the third level—you haven't even explored it yet—and will report that something is preventing the transfer.



However, SSI reports it *should* be able to send you to the Mantis-infested southeast section of the Troll Caves. (This option never responded to any of my clicking, however.)

Mind, there's nothing much new going on in these areas. This teleport is really designed to allow players to retrieve items they may have overlooked earlier in the game, and if you've followed the guide closely, well, you've seen it all! Finea's is still an empty husk, and the monster generators are still whirring tirelessly in the Catacombs.

However, if you teleported out of the Vanguard Keep Towers, you've been prevented from returning there until now. Worth a look! Maybe. I found only one thing had changed: The walls in the entryways to the eastern crystal chamber were ablaze in almost blinding light.

I suppose it could have been just a glitch. But it made me feel that Selene really was out there somewhere in the Keep's dark halls, doing her job, and that, once my party finished its job in the Citadel across the pass, Skelon's Shield would light up like a Christmas tree.

Was I wrong?

## Citadel Level Two

You'll probably go right into action when you clear the top of the stairs. Bear west and kill the Skeletal Warrior to the south and the Manite Steam Golem in the teleporter to the west.

Then run west as far as you can. This will take you through an illusionary wall into a small enclosure with a switch on the west wall. Kill any Golems you find waiting for you. Step outside the illusionary wall and kill any others that might obstruct your return path to the east.

Then return to the enclosure, throw the switch on the west wall, head back through the illusionary wall one last time, and head east. Follow the second hall to the south.

Things have changed here. Drazil will speak up again and identify this huge chamber as his former living quarters. Now it's ... well, it's a second-story lava bed policed by golems and Skeletal Furies. The idea here is to get to the temple-like structure far to the south. (You can't see it yet.) To clear the path, you'll need to hit three switches.







The first is nearby. Head west and check the west side of the red column. Throw the switch, jump down into the lava, and run east, south, and east again to the teleporter midway down the east wall of this chamber.

When you rematerialize, you'll see two additional red columns to the west and south. Approach them and throw their respective switches. Once the third falls into place, you'll find, at the center of the lava flow, three platforms leading off to the south and a glimpse of the temple in the distance.

Hop between the platforms, open the temple doors ... and open fire. Inside, you'll find Jailers (a variation on the Skeletal Fury) and Grimalkins (yet another mountain cat relative). Clear the room and get the Jailer's Key and something over 6,000 GP from the three chests.



Make your way back to the north again. At the first intersection north of the lava room, bear west, and throw the switch in an alcove to the north. Then get back to the intersection and head north and east, and allow yourself to fall into a pit full of golems. Kill 'em all—what else were you thinking of doing!—and press the button in the alcove to the south to activate the elevator that raises the whole chamber back to passage-level. (If you step into the alcove to push the button, step back quickly right afterward, or the party will be crushed against the ceiling.)

Head east and south at the double doors. Hey, another library! You have to love these places, and this one's particularly well put-together. Kill the Corrupted Knights here (Figure 11-7) and spend some time with the books.



**Figure 11-7.**

A Corrupted Knight hangs out in the library.





You'll improve characters' skills in several respects—Martial Arts by 20 points and Stealth and Merchant by 10 each—and there are one or two good laughs as well. ("Books on castle construction and defense line this wall. Many of the authors frown on the overabundant use of secret passages in today's castle construction.")

It's especially funny because the library itself has secret areas up the Wazoo. Push the button on the east wall (Figure 11-8) in the second aisle—you'll hear the creak of a bookshelf descending into the floor—and then move quickly west, north and west, and hop up on the shelf before it can rise again. Put the party in a crouch, move south, and hit the switch on the side of this shelf.



**Figure 11-8.**

This button makes a bookshelf sink into the floor.



This last switch opens a secret room off the library's upper gallery. Climb the stairs in the northeast corner, kill the golems who emerge, and push the green button on the wall. This, in turn, opens another secret room at the south end of the chamber. Inside, you'll find a Manite great helm—finally, the armor is catching up to the party!—two Major Heal potions and the Demon Amulet. (This interesting item will kick in later on this level.)

Are we there yet! Nope. Go back to the stairs, kick the party into a crouch, and look under the stairs. You'll find a blue button. Press it, stand up again and reexamine the bookcase to your north. You'll find a book—*The Hunter's Track*, which advances a character's Stealth skill 50 points—and a Mana potion.





Leave the library, continue east toward the stairs back to Level One, and enter the next corridor to the south. Duck into the first alcove to the east and you'll find a secret door. Behind it is Radiant plate chest armor, 5,000 G/P, and a Needler pistol.

You won't have gone too far south before you run into a desperate, worn-down man who'll tell you of torture in a prison on this level. He flees with a shriek at the approach of three Skeletal Warriors. Fight them off (Figure 11-9) and continue south until you reach a "T" intersection.



**Figure 11-9.**

In this hallway, you learn of a prison on this level.



The intersection is more like a cul-de-sac. The door to the west is effectively a brick wall, and the one to the east—leading to the prison—closes when you approach. It's a good thing there's a secret door in the north wall just west of the east door. Head north into this enclosure, then test the north wall for a second secret door, and proceed into the room beyond. The Jailer's Key you found will open the locked gate in this room.

And now you're in jail. Do not pass "G/O." Do not collect 200 G/P. Do, however, kill off all the guards, head north to the torture chamber, and repeat the procedure. Get Ashak's Key (in the cage at the northeast corner of the fire pit) and pick the locks on the cells that ring the room.

Some hold enemies, some grateful captives, and some grateful captives with good hard info. The woman in the northeast cell will tell you about a drainage system linking all the rooms on this level, and of a prison cell with a loose grate.





But the most fascinating bit of info comes from a seeming madwoman in the southwest cell (Figure 11-10). She refers, frantically, to a creature with a face of thorns, with a primal voice taken more from nature than from man, that she believes will come for her. She heard it talking about a mirror as "a source of pain."



**Figure 11-10.**

This woman offers the first description of a creature you'll come to know as Anthrax.

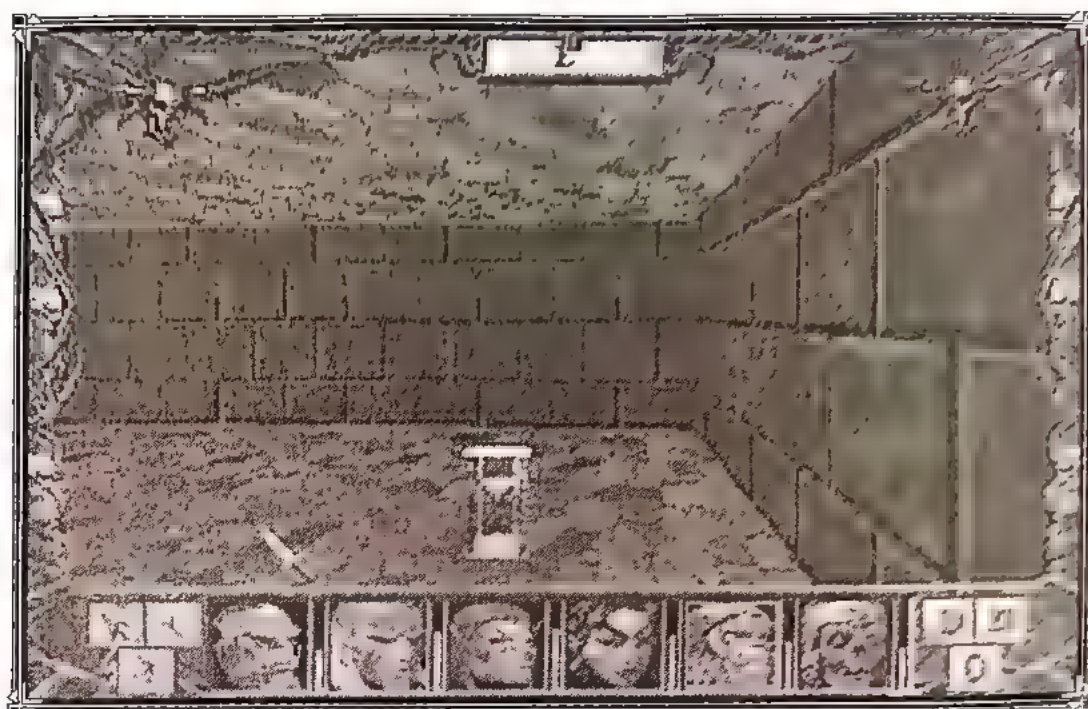
"It's face enough is pain," she weeps. "What does it need of a mirror?" Run this same drill in the prison section to the south. Here there are more enemies in the cells—including your old pals, the Raveners, from the Vanguard Keep Halls!—and you will pick up a reference to a key in the Avatar's sealed quarters. And in the eastern rank of cells, you'll find a locked door. Open it. There's a wide hole in the floor. You've found the path into the drains!

Before you descend, have a look at the room at the south side of the hall. Initially, it just seems to be a holding area for Grimalkins—those chocolate-brown versions of the mountain cat that serve as prison's guard dogs. Kill them and take the hourglass (Figure 11-11) in the southeast corner.





**Figure 11-11.**  
It's an hourglass!  
How odd.



But this, too, is a part of the prison—and a very odd one at that. In the central enclosure, you'll find two men the color of polished marble (Figure 11-12) in cells designed so that they cannot sit down. They are on opposite sides of a mirror with a viscous surface and a key—two images of a key, actually—suspended within.

**Figure 11-12.**  
Ashak imprisoned





Speak to one of them, and you will effectively hear two voices—one tormented, another almost demonic—speaking back. Talk about sending mixed messages! What you read in the hidden library on Level One and what the madwoman in the torture cell told you are beginning to make sense. The prisoner, Ashak, has been split in two. Who can put Ashak together again?

You can, but not just yet. You have one option at this point: Head for the drainage system. Return to the prison proper and drop into the hole in the cell with the missing grate. You'll reappear in an area that looks very much like the flooded section of the north Sewers.

This maze, technically under Level Two but in fact in the south-central part of the level, ultimately leads to the exit. Follow the passage south, west, south, and east kill the Grimalkins that have gathered here, and enter the loose grate in the room's southeast corner. Press the blue button on the east wall and return to the upper level.



From this room, head north, northeast, north, and west. Step into the first alcove to the south, descend into the grate you'll find here, and get the Sludge Key before returning topside.

**Note:** You'll notice something interesting during this trip. You'll start getting tug-at-your sleeve directions from the Demon Amulet. They are not constant and they involve only the four cardinal directions, but they're accurate and it's better than nothing.

Retrace your steps to the room with the grate that led to the blue button. Move west until you can't go any further and then make a series of short hops—north, west, south, and west—to another grate. The Sludge Key opens the gate to the west. Throw the switch in the room to the west and loot the treasure room beyond it (over 5,000 C/P, potions, weapons, and armor) before returning through gate and grate.

Return to the corridor that leads to the grate where you found the Sludge Key. Go all the way west to another grate. Drop into it, and head south, and then east to a second grate. Finally, move straight south and enter the last grate.





Gratel Er ... great! You've used the drains to get around that brick-wall door west of the prison. Head north and east, throw the switches in the passages to the north and south, and enter the gate to the east.

An elevator will take you up to the Avatar's chamber ... which is not empty (Figure 11-13). Kill the Overseers here—who are much more like hard-to-hit normal guys than bosses—and we'll see what's lying around.

**Figure 11-13.**

The Overseers. You get to oversee their demise.



Not much is here. The only thing is the "Avatar's Note." In this document, the Radiant Citadel chief states that, if the Citadel can't ensure maintenance of its control over the Shield, his cohorts are to remove the crystals from the generator. (He also gives a good reference for imprisoned Ashak—just in case you worried that he was some kind of Nocturnal crony. It's OK to set him free.)

The real prize lies down the narrow stairs that have opened in the floor. In this lava-walled room, you'll find the Ebony Key, Ivory Key, and the Radiant 3 Key that will admit the party to the third level.

You can either exit to the south—the big doors upstairs that closed when you entered are open again—or through a secret passage to the southwest, which will take you to the south end of the library. (Check here for yet another secret room!) Return to Ashak for another split-screen conversation with this tormented creature.



This time, you have the right stuff to free him. Remember the black and white images of the key within the mirror! Well, you now have black and white keys to match—ebony and ivory.

Click each of them on the mirror. The first will be absorbed. The second will make the mirror explode, and you'll have a new NPC volunteer at your disposal.

Take him on. Drazil's effectiveness appears to wane late in the game, and he tends more and more to be the party member with the weakest chin.

Ashak, on the other hand, has experience with the Nocturnals and is an intimidating warrior. This Jurak, clad from head to toe in Radiant plate, is capable with both axe and sword—he carries the Deathwish axe and Whisper blade you found in the Skryptors' room in the Catacombs—and is a fine martial artist and spellcaster to boot (Figure 11-14). The only problem is that he doesn't have any spells to cast yet. But he'll learn those quickly once the party returns to action.



**Figure 11-14.**  
Ashak, in profile

**Note:** Just for fun, save your game before this sequence and decline Ashak's offer of help. You've never waited through a more pregnant pause than this one. He's obviously annoyed at being refused.





Take from Drazil's stock of possessions just what you need, and exit north and west and north again to the teleporter just west of the stairs to Level One. Be warned: You can expect a *sizable* crowd of Manite Steam Golems to be waiting for you in this area.

The teleport will zap you off to an enclave in the far northwest corner of the map. Unlock the gate and climb the stairs to Level Three.



## Citadel Level Three

This is the final full level of *Thunderscape*. Level Four is reserved for the final combat with the evil presence, for which Ashak has finally supplied a name: Anthrax.

ANTHRAX? The sheep disease, or the heavy-metal band! Doesn't matter. Bully your way down the corridor to the south, killing golems and Floating Intellects—a more sophisticated take on the Floating Brains of Karegh-Konan—and head east until you find a green button behind a suit of armor. A bit to the west, duck into the room to the south and bear east. The chests here contain more than 10,000 GP. (What are you going to do with all this money if there isn't a sequel?)

Use the exit to the east, head north, and follow this expansive hallway to the end. Move east, through the door, and then open the wooden door to the north. Inside, get the Guardhouse Key. Then exit and continue east.

The next room to the north contains the "Shield Instructions" document. Read this as soon as possible, and don't let all the techie detail freak you out. It all comes down to placing two crystals, unlocking locks, and pushing buttons in four connected rooms. (You'll handle it easily when the time comes.)

Finally, at the end of the hall, you'll find the Generator Keyring. Exit back to the main hall and open the metal door at the north end of the hall. Kill the golems inside, unlock the inner door, kill the Floating Intellect, and get Capacitor Key 3.

Do you notice something odd in the room that leads to the Capacitor Key? The furniture is all jumbled up against the wall, as though someone had barricaded themselves in here. Given the circumstances of your visit, that's entirely possible. Check the door. What could have them so scared that—

Oops. Hello! Um, good-bye! This deposits you just east of where you started the level. And, depending how thorough you were in your hacking and slashing upon entering, there may be a fair number of Floating Intellects







out here now. Kill them and return the way you came. (Note: There's no special profit to be had here, and you don't have to open the barricaded door at all. I mention it just to satisfy your curiosity.)

Man, we're just surging along here! However, you're ultimately limited to what you can do in this area. The shield generators themselves are out, and, without power, some doors won't open. (Actually, even if they did open you wouldn't want to use what's behind them just yet!)

However, you can trek back south, open the wooden door to the east, and get the lantern and the Manite great helm.

Back in the main corridor, continue south and then head west and north. Stop again when you reach the stained-glass window depicting a Mantis (Figure 11-15)—check out all the stained-glass windows while you're here—and turn east up a corridor flanked by two giant skulls.



**Figure 11-15.**  
One of the stained-glass windows in the Radiant Citadel

The double doors to the east are locked, which doesn't seem to intimidate the Floating Intellecks, who keep attacking you through them anyway. They're opened by answering the skulls' riddles correctly.

The left-hand one asks: *"Show me that which the nocturnals have denied us."*

That would be light. But how to show it? Well, there is that lantern you found recently. Click it on the skull. That'll do it.

The other riddle is a little more obtuse: *"Show me that which is precious—that which you do not have."* How's that again, chum?



How can I show you what I don't have? Well, what other distinctive, nowhere-else-in-the-game object have you found recently? An hourglass, right? The answer is "time."

**Figure 11-16.**

The skulls light up if you give the right answers.



The skulls light up (Figure 11-16) and the party is ordered to approach the door, which will open on its own. You've found a vital room, but you'll have to read the book in an adjoining chamber to see just how vital. (First thing's first, though: Put the party in a crouch and punch the blue bottom under the table right in front of the door.)

Essentially, the book is an account by a mage of the Radiant Order of his attempt to hide the two crystals that power Skelon's Shield from the Nocturnals. One is in a specially created Nexus chamber—reachable only by teleporters, each of which is supplied with a distinctive trap. The other lies in a room in the southwest part of the level and evidently requires some athletic prowess to reach—not something the Nocturnals are supposed to be much good at.

However, the writer adds, there's a problem: The White Crystal that activates the teleporters is missing.

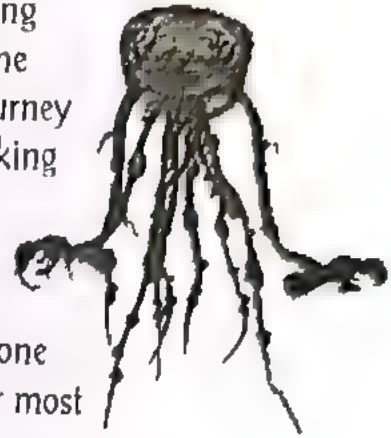
In other words, pal, you've got your hands full.

You're not quite ready for teleporters yet, but you can open the teleporter gates with a switch in the room to the south. You'll also find a Warped Area Key here and, in a bookshelf in the southwest corner, a Maelstrom Spellbook.



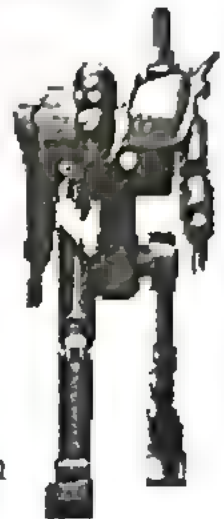
Then again, it's hard to imagine a task more grueling than the next couple of sections. Head back to the main hall, and bear south and east to the engraved double doors. This is evidently where Floating Intellects go to meet and greet other Floating Intellects. The place is packed with them, and, naturally, you have to journey to the far eastern tip of the warren to get what you're looking for: The lost White Crystal and Capacitor Key 2.

Leave this complex and head west until you reach a set of double doors just before corridor turns north. This area is to Manite Steam Golems what the previous one was to the Intellects, and, once again, you'll have to clear most of it out before you can proceed.



For starters, go as far to the south as you can and throw the switch on the west wall. Head north again and climb the stairs that have appeared in the north wall just east of the entrance.

These lead onto the platforms you spotted as you explored the room below. At the top of the stairs, make a running leap to the platform to the northwest. (This must be the chamber where one of the crystals is hidden! I'd like to see a Manite Steam Golem make this jump.)



Then save your game, for the next part is tricky and unpredictable even for human beings.

Enter the north-south hall west of the platform, and move south. You'll hear a loud clank as you go. Ahead, you'll see a room ahead with a decorative plaque on one section of the south wall.

That's the door. Or it will be. The idea is to get it open without being smushed, squeezed, encased, or even just flanked by the four blocks that, triggered by your movement across certain floor tiles, move back and forth along the entry corridor and the room beyond.

The best thing you can do here is experiment. I'm not going to pretend that I fully understand the mechanism here; I suspect it has some variables other than simple contact with a particular floor tile. (For instance, it's very difficult to predict what the block that runs up and down the north-south corridor will do and when.)



However, the exit door does seem closely tied to the movements of the three blocks in the room proper. After they all move and then move back into their original positions, the door should open. It may help if the player is standing right at the northern entrance to the room.

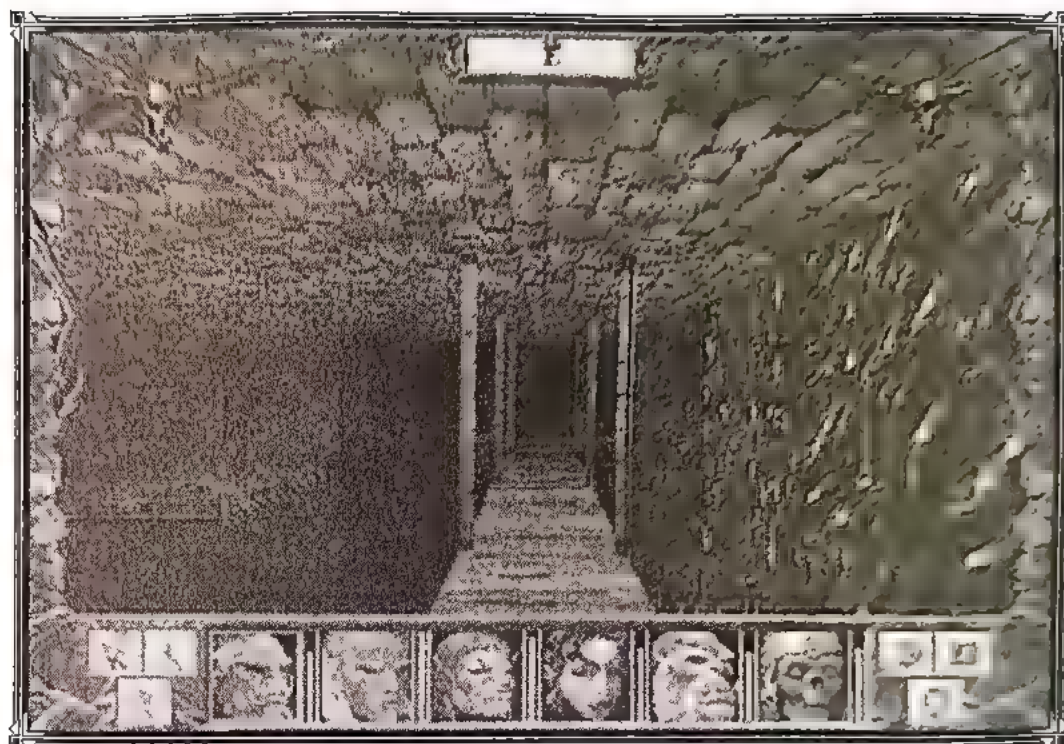




Continue south, bear east, and cross the bridge (Figure 11-17). Get the Red Crystal from the pentagram—say, this feels familiar!—throw the lever on the west wall and get back to the exit. Head west and north and then east to the teleport complex. Hope you're ready for some puzzles.

**Figure 11-17.**

This bridge leads to one of the two Mana crystals.



## Fast Feet

Enter the teleporter in the northwest corner of the complex. This is the puzzle for the fleet of foot—the idea being to run between platforms along a narrow walkway. If you're not fast enough, the walkway descends into lava. If you fall off, you descend into lava.

However, it's short and it's easy. Just walk fast. Don't run. You'll only fall off and get molten rock on your shoes. Step into the teleporter when you reach the end of the line. When you rematerialize in the Nexus—a strange enclosure of sealed-off teleporters and a magical forcefield—click on the red column to raise the shroud over your teleporter and use the teleporter to the northwest. This will take you back to the teleporter complex.



## Keen Eyes

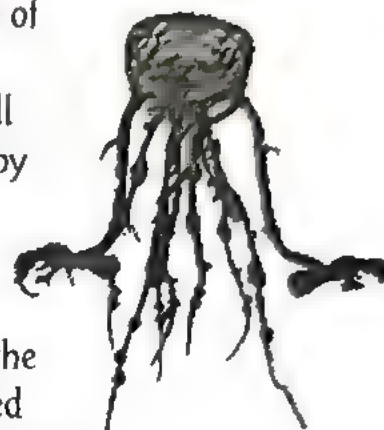
This time around, use the teleporter to the northeast. This puts you in a mossy maze. Your job is to throw a switch that activates a platform that, in turn, allows you to make a running jump and grab the Capacitor Key. Time is of the essence, because the platform will only stay in position a short time.

At its root, this puzzle is dead simple. Simply bear north from your starting location to find the switch. The platform is just east of the switch. Once you've got the key, drop down into the teleporter to return to the area from which you launched your jump.

Unfortunately, the place is also full of Floating Intellects who invariably attack right after you've thrown the lever and are rushing to make the jump. You'll wind up having to clear the area of enemies before you can get on with business.

Business isn't over once you've got the key. You'll still need to find the exit teleporter—a task best accomplished by following the maze's perimeter south and east. (It's at 48,58,2060. The alcove leading into the teleporter is built of dark stone.)

Kill the golem inside, unlock the gate, and step into the stained-glass circle to be zapped out. Again, click on the red column in front of you, and head for the teleporter to the northwest to reach the main teleporter room.



## Compass Games

Save your game. Also take several deep breaths. This next quest is probably *Thunderscape's* most merciless bit of trickery.

It's a teleport puzzle. But you don't know that right away. You won't know you're being teleported unless you're watching your compass closely, and that's not a foolproof detection method, because sometimes you're zapped into an identical position elsewhere in the maze (Figure 11-18). (The only other giveaway is an almost imperceptible flicker of the screen.)

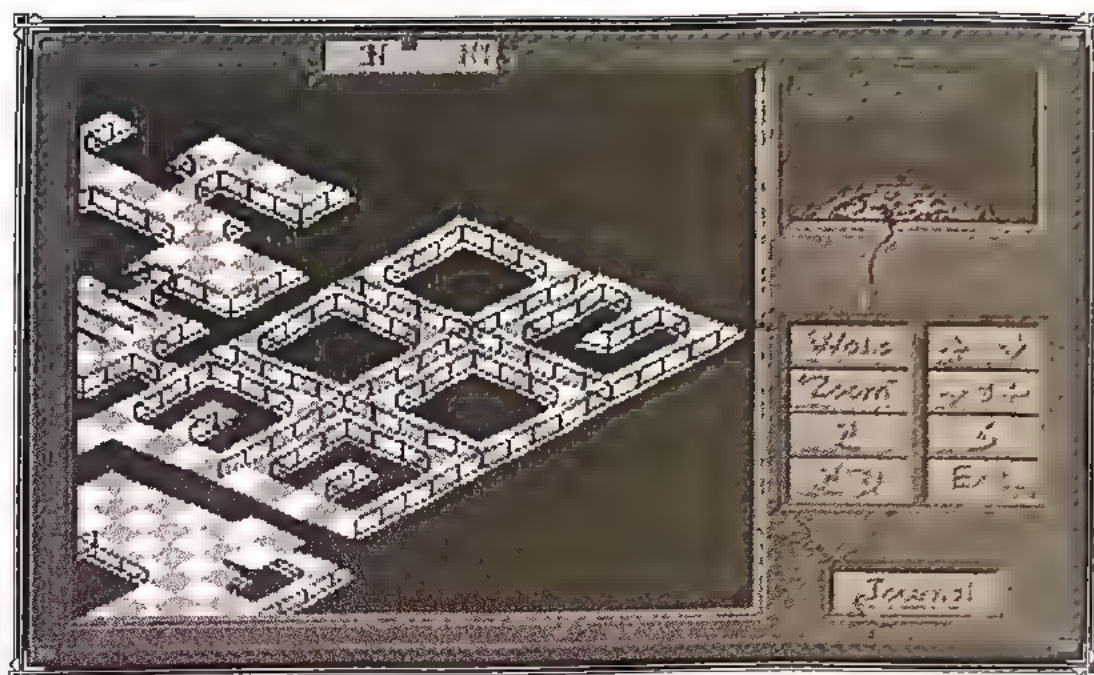
Just go through it slowly and methodically, one step at a time. Use the "F4" key regularly to determine your current map position. Don't use the mouse, run, or even walk fast. Tap the direction keys lightly. That way, you'll take baby steps and not fall victim to the dreaded double-teleport trap in which the player coasting to a stop unknowingly teleports twice—into a new area and then out of it.





**Figure 11-18.**

Here's part of the teleport maze. You start over there. Or was it over ... No, it was over ... Oh, forget it.



To make things easier to follow, we'll lay out the procedure step by step.

- 1) Use the southwestern teleport. You'll zap to 57,5,2052.
- 2) Walk as far as you can (not very far) north, east, and south. Turn west.
- 3) Take two steps to the west, and you'll teleport out. You're now facing north at 50,11,2052.
- 4) Move all the way north and turn east. Take two steps to the east, and you'll teleport out. You're now facing east at 51,13,2052. Do not move any farther to the east.
- 5) Turn around and move all the way west. Take one step, and you'll teleport out. You're now facing north at 59,11,2052. The Round Room Key should be on the ground in front of you. Pick it up. This is a good point at which to save your game.
- 6) Turn around and move all the way south. Turn west and take two steps, and you'll teleport out. You're now at 58,17,2052 and facing west. There should be a locked gate just ahead of you and to your right.
- 7) Turn around, move all the way east, and turn north. Take three steps and you'll teleport out. You're now facing north at 54,5,2052.





- 8) Turn around, move all the way south, and turn west. You should see a lock ahead of you on your right. You've got the key now, so unlock it.
- 9) Move all the way west, and, just before you reach the wall, you'll teleport out. You're now facing west at 56,12,2052.
- 10) Turn around so you're facing east and move east a couple of steps. You'll teleport out and wind up facing east at 58,17,2052.
- 11) Turn west and enter the alcove to the north. Push the blue button on the north wall.
- 12) Move all the way south and all the way east and turn north. Take three steps forward and you'll teleport out. You're now facing north at 54,5,2052.
- 13) Take two steps forward and you'll teleport out. You're now facing south at 55,7,2052.
- 14) Turn around so you're facing north. Take three steps and you'll teleport out. You're now facing south at 54,15,2052.
- 15) Go all the way south, turn west, and enter the teleporter chamber to the north.
- 16) You made it! Click on the red column for a third time and use the teleporter to the northwest to zap back to the teleport room.

## ***The Awards Banquet***

The final teleporter isn't a trap; it rewards you for graduating from the three puzzles.

Enter the teleporter to the southeast. This time, you'll go directly to the Nexus (Figure 11-19). Click on the red column. It will descend and the enclosure around your teleport will lift. Approach and click on the blue column at the center of the room. A fanfare will play and the column will recede into the ceiling, leaving in its place a blue crystal.

Take the crystal and use the teleporter to the northwest one last time. You now have the means to light up this side of Skelon's Shield.



**Figure 11-19.**  
The Nexus



## *Seeing the Light*

Let's put the crystals to work. Leave the teleporter complex and head for the generator rooms at 16,14,2052 (red crystal) and 46,14,2052 (blue crystal). Secure each crystal in its proper place. If you do so correctly, you'll hear the sound of wind chimes.

***Note:** Certain rooms seem to collect more than their share of bad guys. The Red Crystal generator room is one of these. You'll find it well-defended by a range of Golems and Intellects.*

Return to the main room between the two generator chambers, and unlock the gate to the north and the Capacitor switches inside. Throw both switches and press the reset buttons on the two pillars that have surfaced in the main room. Then throw the safety-override switch on the north side of the central column. Well done! Columns rise from the floor. Power begins to flow. A great glow suffuses the room.



There's one small bit of trickery here. It may happen that you approach the central column, spit in your palms, crack your knuckles, and throw the override switch and ...

And nothing happens. No arc of electricity. No magic.

Perhaps you forgot something somewhere! Something, say, back in the Ogre Caves!

No, no, I'm just teasing. Did you read "Shield Instructions?" Well, do so now. The trick is that the two capacitor-reset buttons have a time limit. If you don't hit the override switch quickly after activating them, they'll reset automatically.

Your final act here should be to head south to the two opposing sets of electric doors. They turn out to be teleporters to the roof. Going up? Then step to the rear and throw the switch. Anthrax is going down.

## Citadel Level Four

Was there ever a computer-game bad guy who didn't live on the top floor or the sub-basement? Doubt it. Anthrax and his bodyguards have the Radiant Citadel penthouse—the former chapel, from the look of it—and something is up in there. Even with the flicker of lightning in the pitch-black sky, you can see a hellish glow through the stained-glass windows.



Make your way to the stairs at the south side of the central structure. Don't be surprised if you have a fight along the way. A quartet of Nightmares—black horses with 300 HP and flames for wings—roams the level and you'll probably face one or two before you open the doors for your face-off with the big guy. (Is this what became of the horses from the Citadel stable?)



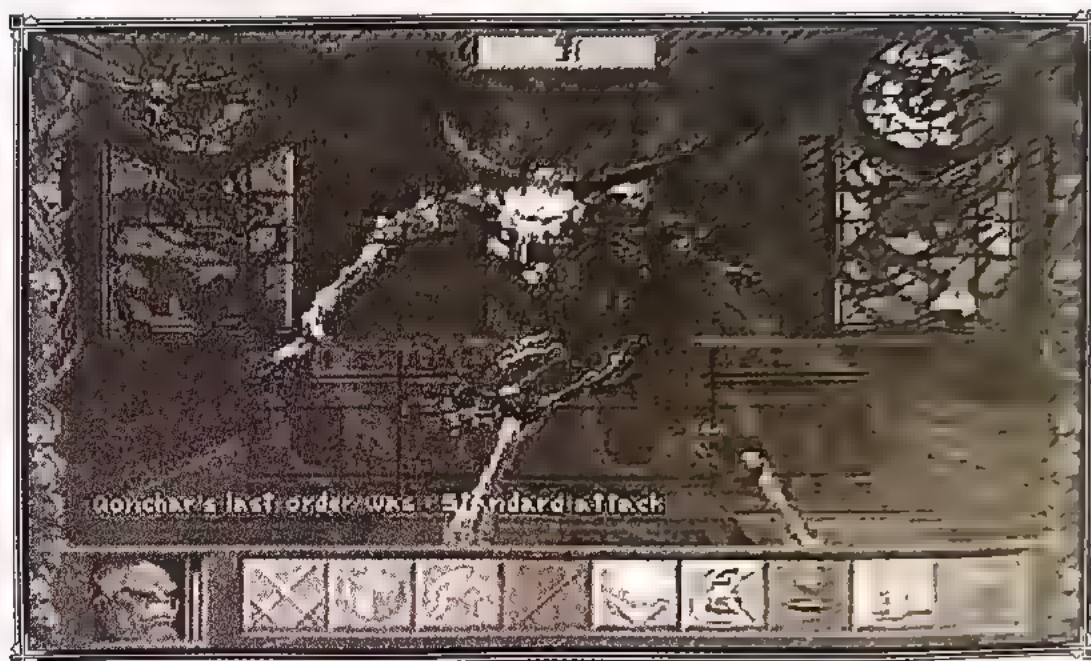




And, finally, at the north end of the chapel, there is Anthrax (Figure 11-20)—a sort of demon-minotaur with a Kabuki Theater mask, a face of thorns (just as the madwoman said), and the voice of a thousand-year-old dragon.

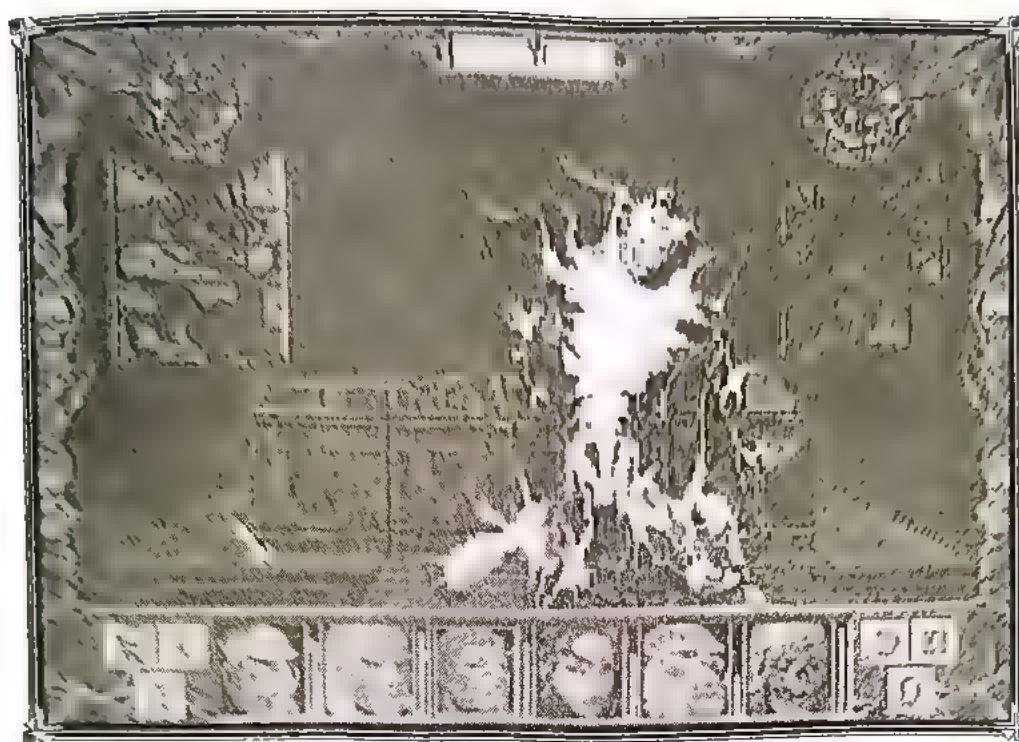
**Figure 11-20.**

A bad case of Anthrax



The game sets you up to think a mirror might come in handy for this battle, but there is no special trick here, if you couldn't kill Anthrax, you probably wouldn't be here now. You just have to whittle down his 2,500 HP. An experienced party should be able to knock off 500 per combat round with conventional weapons—more like 1,000 to 1,500 with the use of the right spells. Anthrax has a resistance to magic, but is relatively vulnerable to cold, and a barrage of full-mana Ice Missile spells is bound to make an impression on him (Figure 11-21).

My team—the original four default characters, plus Ashak and Tophet—ranged in level from the mid-40s to mid-60s when we took him on, and it was a breeze. I've taken worse damage during haircuts. Then again, the four core members of the party suffered through a lot more to bring you this story than your party needs to endure. I'd recommend your party's average level for the final encounter should be 40 or higher just to be on the safe side.



**Figure 11-21.**

The cure for a bad case of Anthrax

A few mildly interesting notes on Level Four. (There aren't many; the whole level would fit in your pocket).

- ◆ The two teleporters remain active after you arrive. If you find even the Nightmares are too much too soon, you can retreat to the third level. Once you're in the chapel, however, you're here to stay.
- ◆ While you can jump on top of the walls, you can't throw yourself over the parapet.
- ◆ The only feature here beside Anthrax's headquarters is a pair of would-be scenic overlooks to the east and west. Each of them has a raised section, which suggests that, at some point, this level was supposed to have the globes you'll see in the final animation. (They were removed for technical reasons before the game was complete.)
- ◆ You don't have to rush up to the altar and fight Anthrax right away. It's fun to explore the room while he taunts the party. See if you can extract all of his comments. (As noted earlier, the stained-glass window depictions of various Nocturnals look great.) This stand-off will last either until you make a break for the exit or Anthrax gets impatient, in which case he'll force a confrontation immediately.



- ◆ The balcony at the south end of the room is a tempting target for a running long jump off the top of the pews. However, you can't quite make it. Don't fret, though, there is nothing up there.

Note, too, that the game does not end immediately with the monster's passing. Once Anthrax is consumed in a gout of green flame, the switch that reactivates Skelon's Shield unfolds right where he was standing. If you're done looking at the chapel, punch that sucker and sit back and watch the ending animation as the great blue wall reconstitutes itself explosively and lays waste the Nocturnal army that holds the pass.

It is over—finally over—and the Northlands is safe, the Nocturnals either dead or reduced to their normal state of disarray. And Theros? And Bert? And Finea? We can only hope that they did not fall in the battle. The thunder still rages outside, but the black cloud has lifted. For the moment, at least, the World of Aden can live in hope.





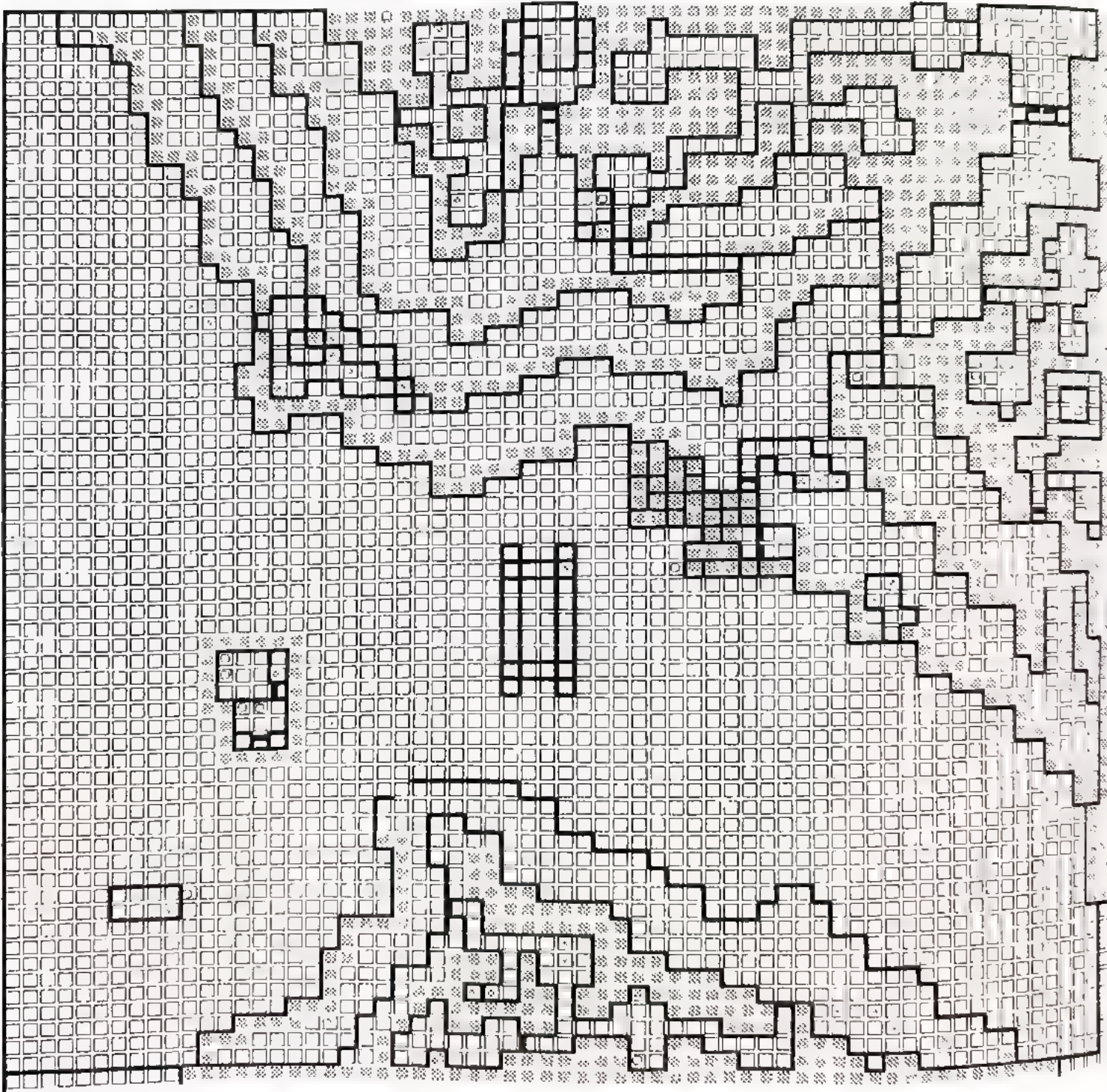
Landscapes



## Skelon's Gorge

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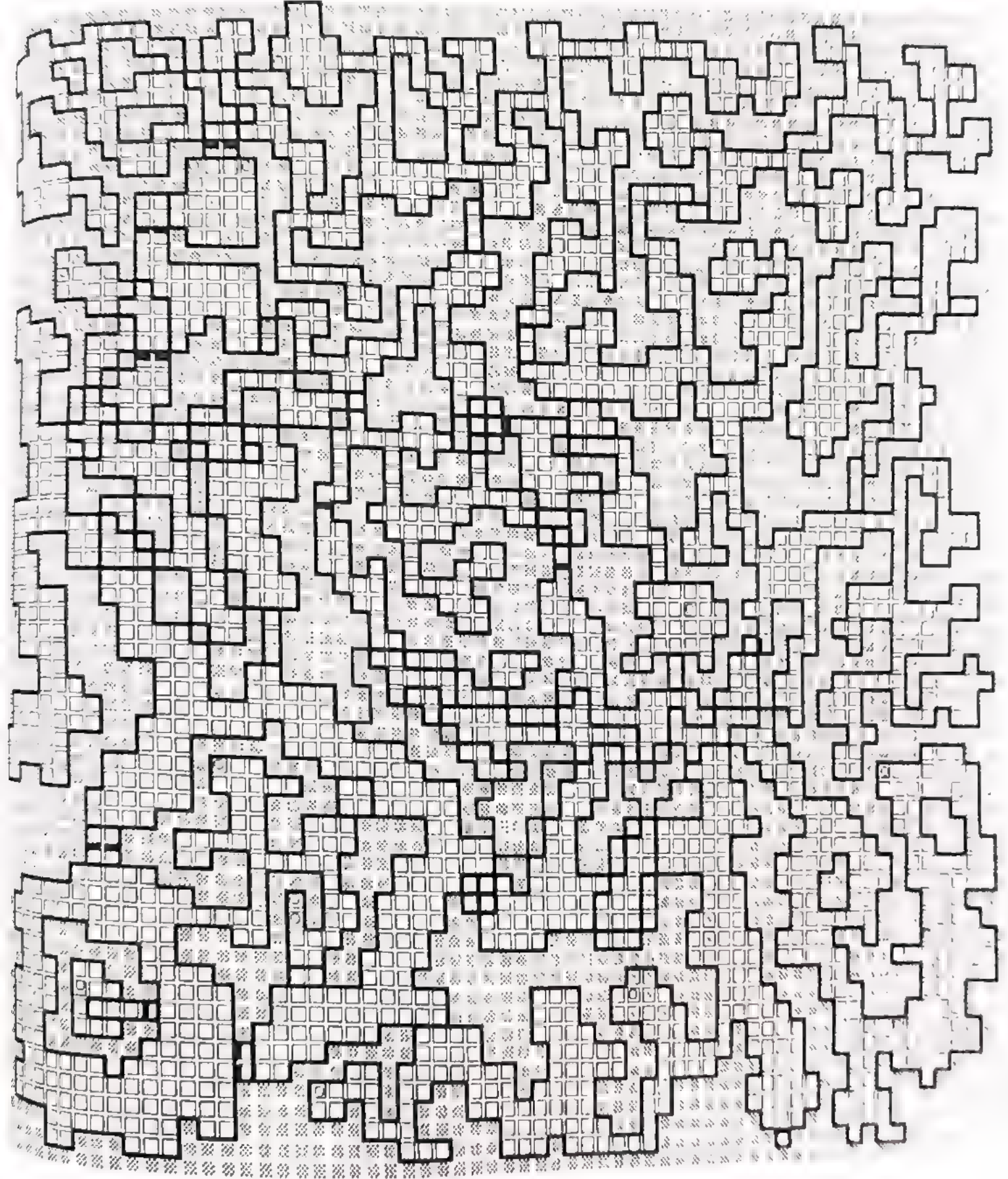






# Troll Caves

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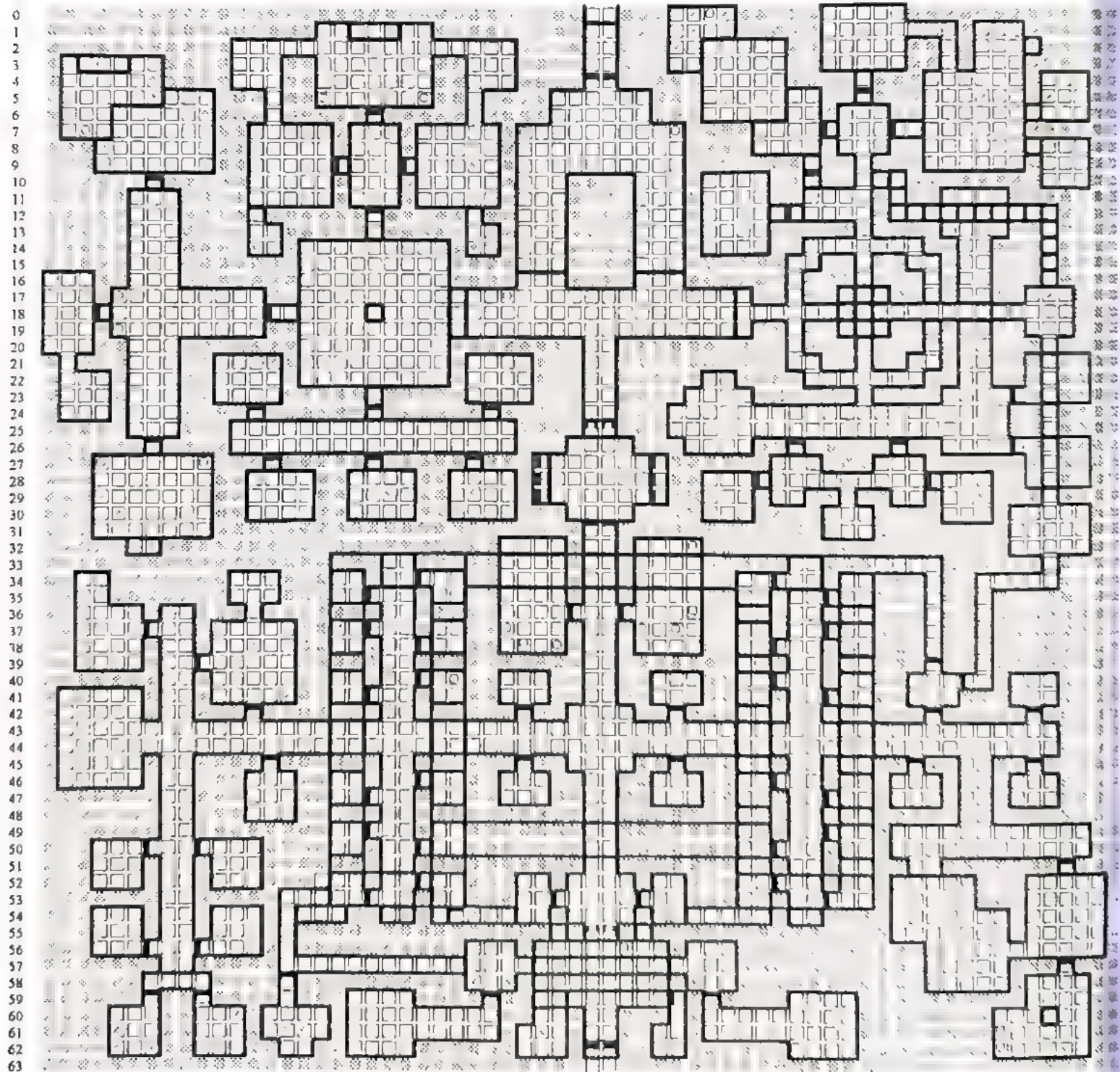






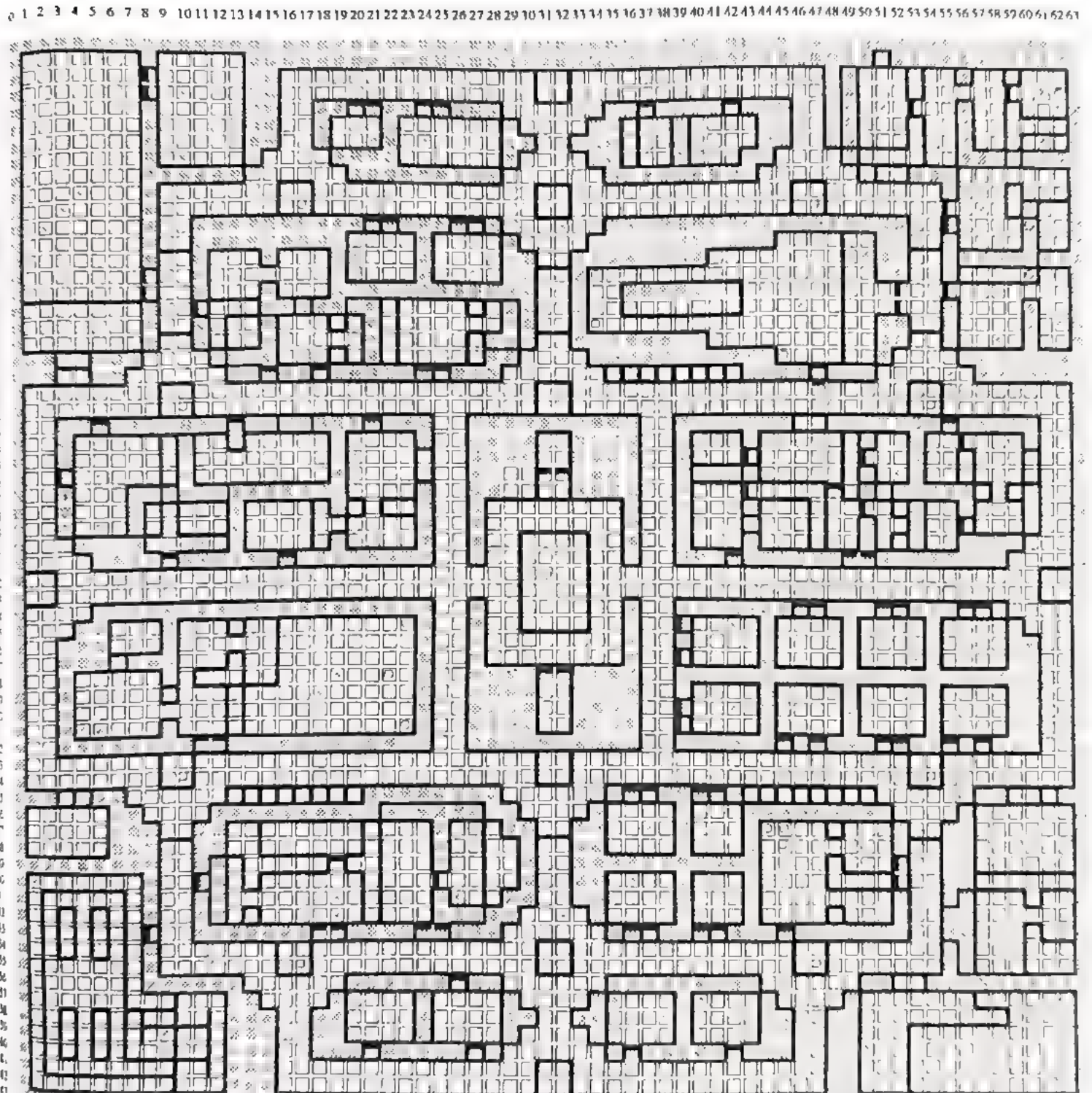
## Vanguard Keep Dungeons

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## Vanguard Keep Halls

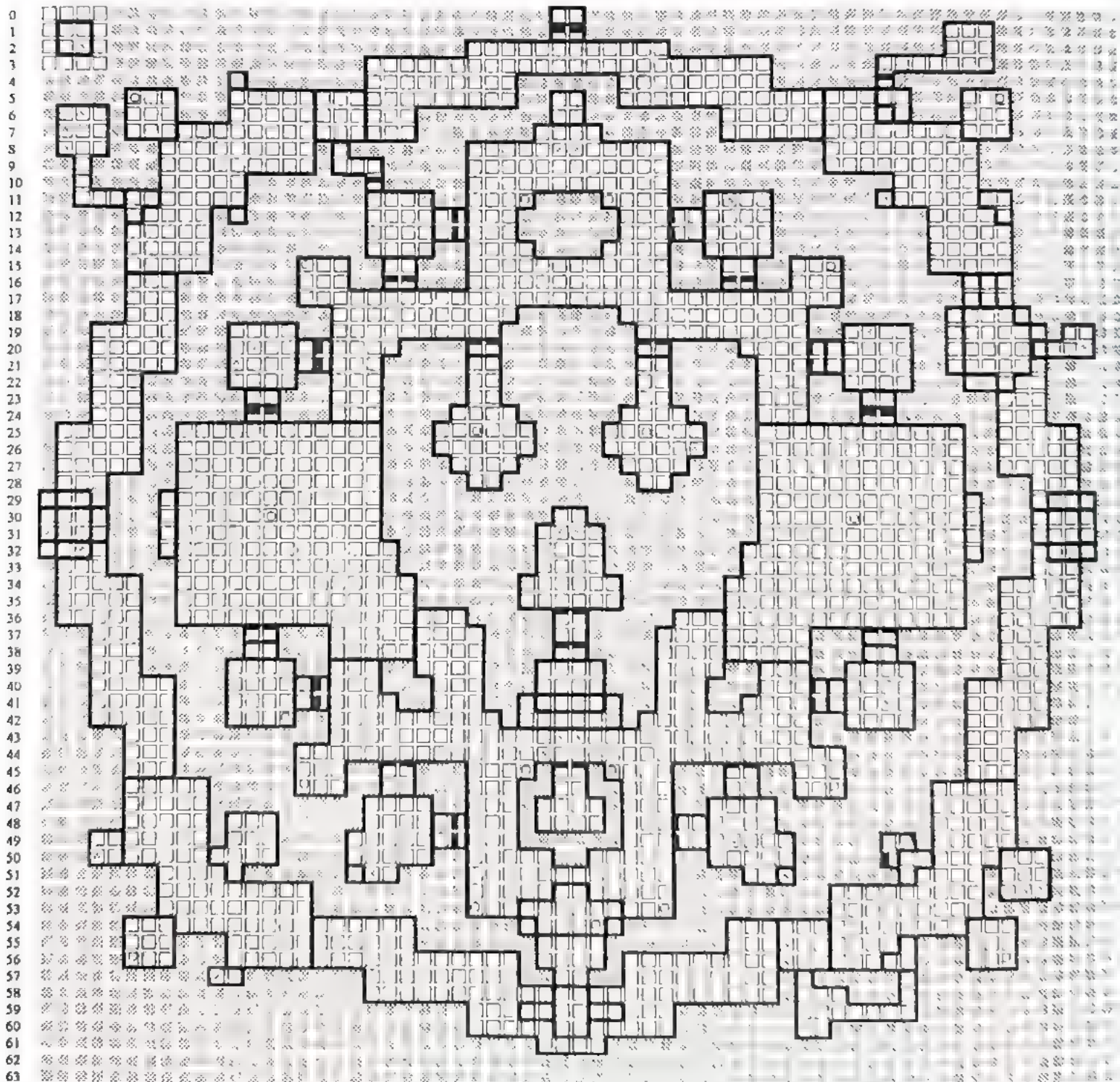






## Keep Beacon Towers

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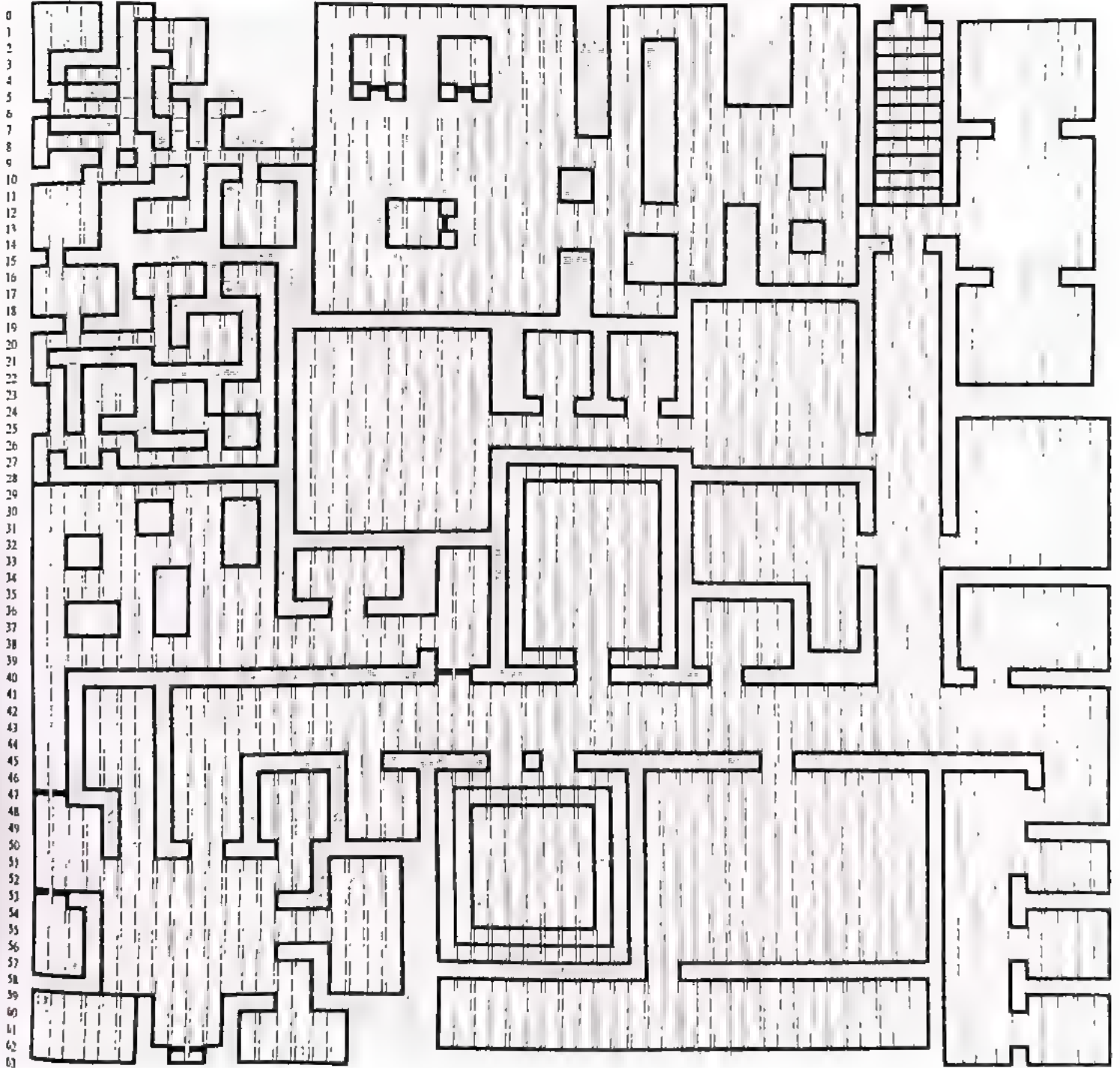






## The Ogre Caves

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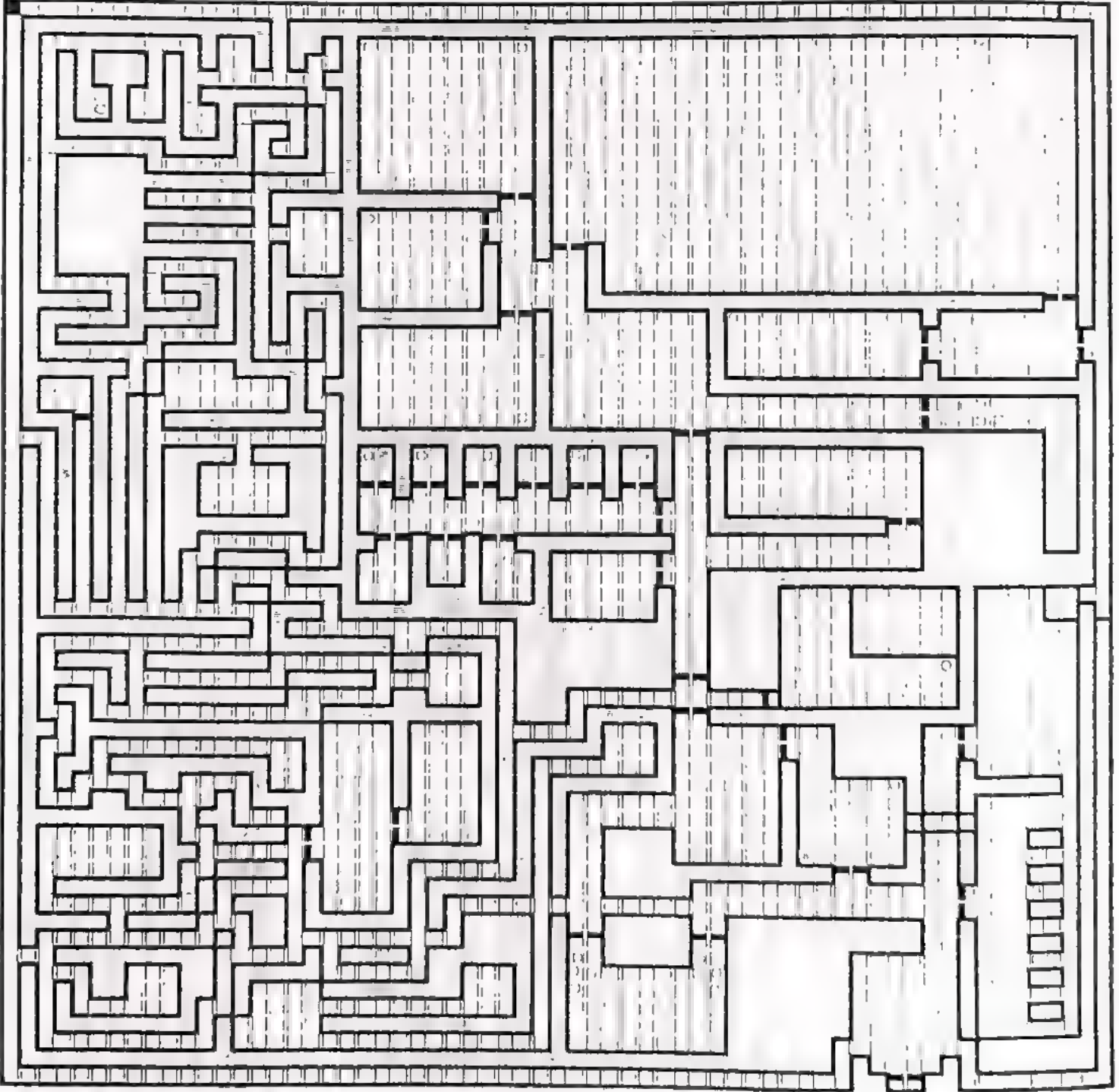




## *The Golem Factory*

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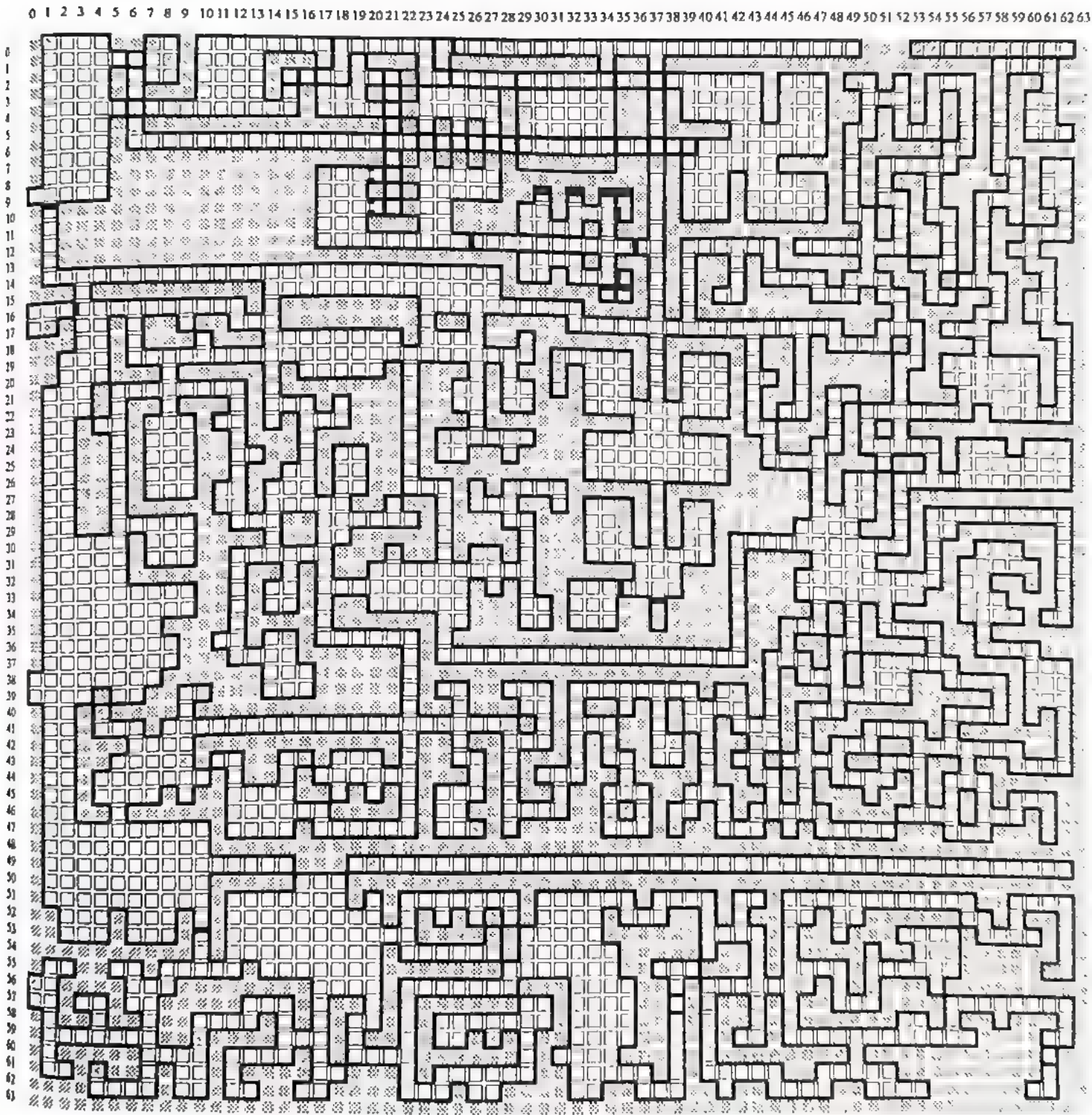
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West Mines

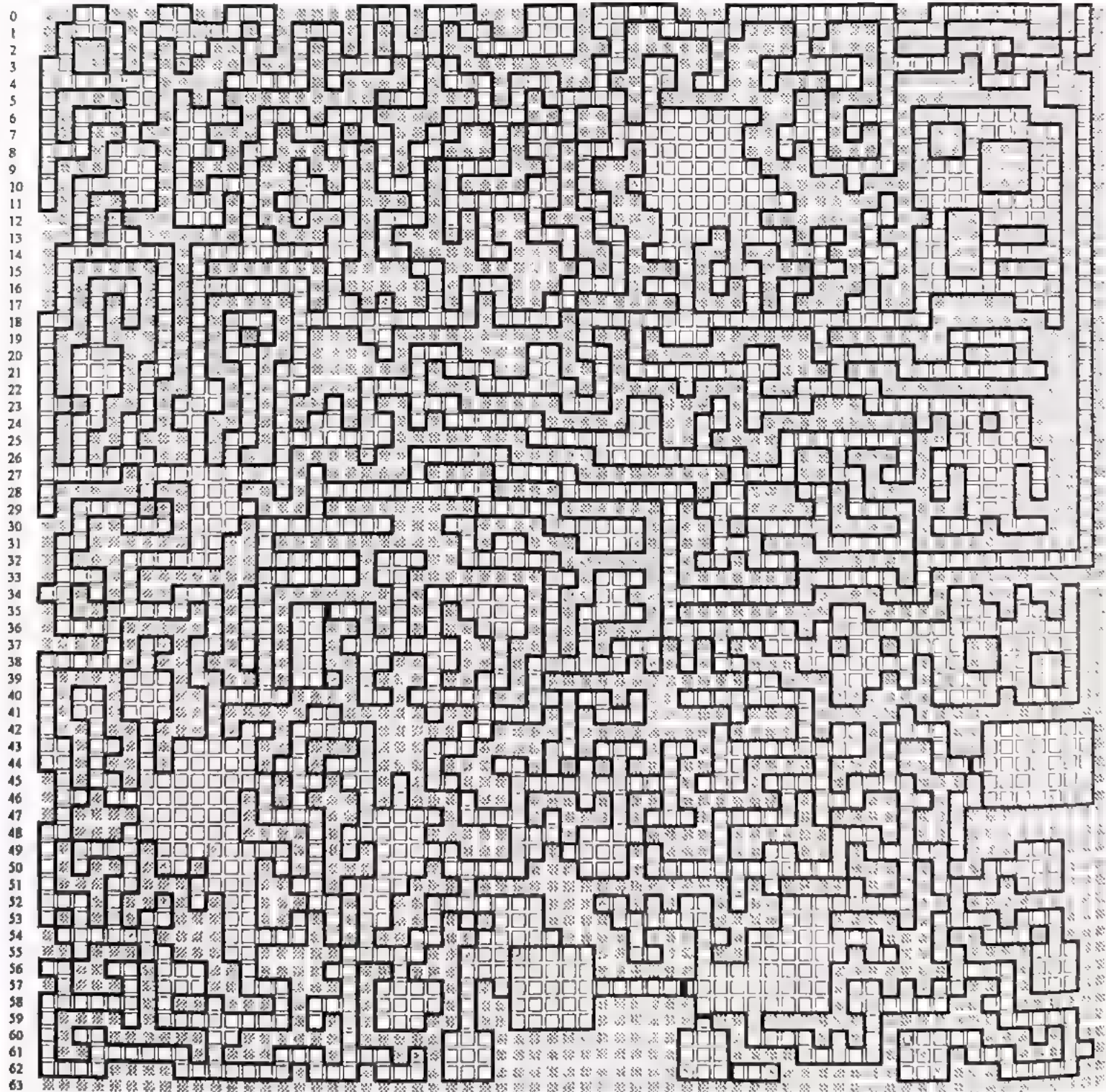






## Old Mines

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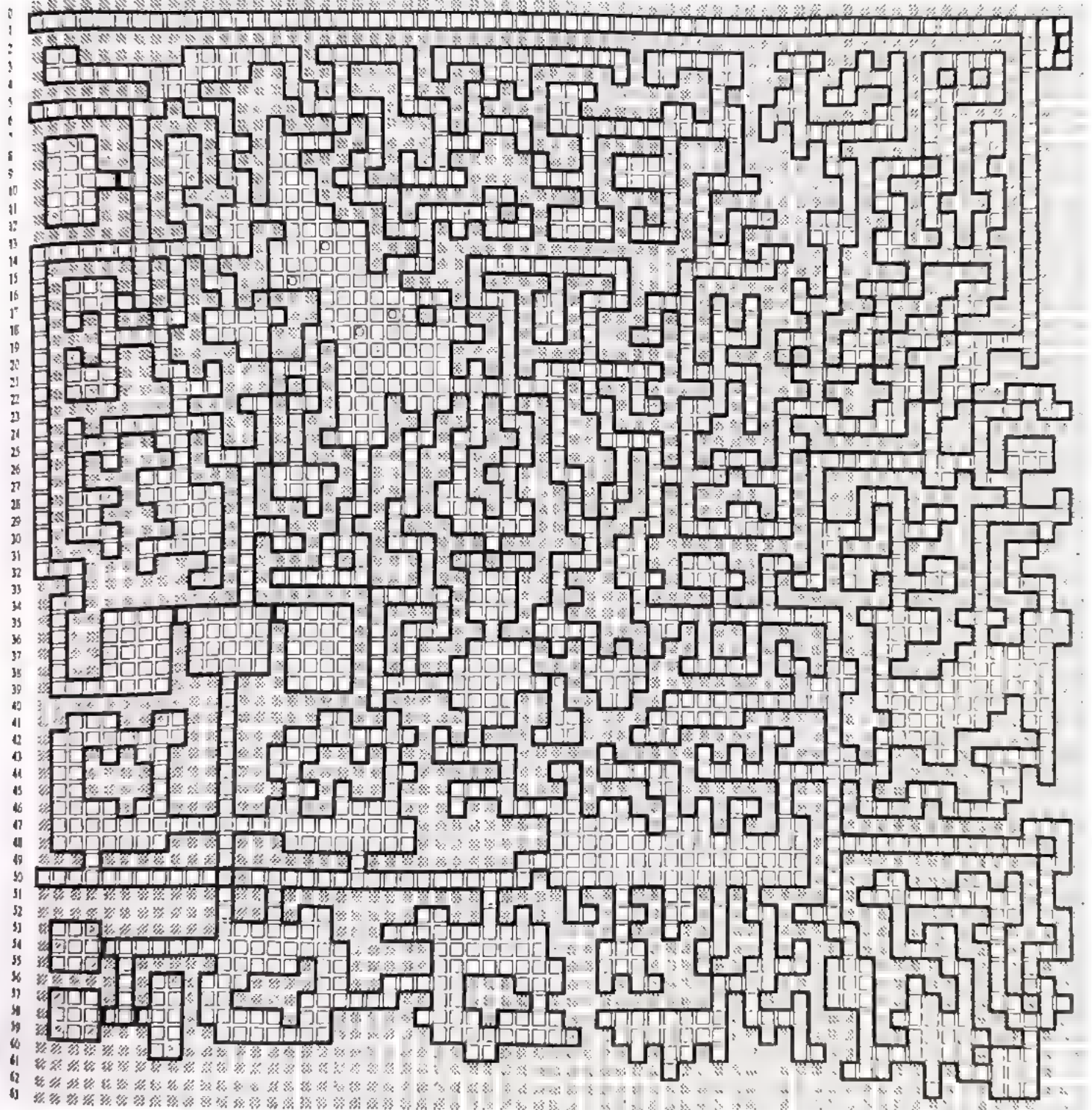






## East Mines

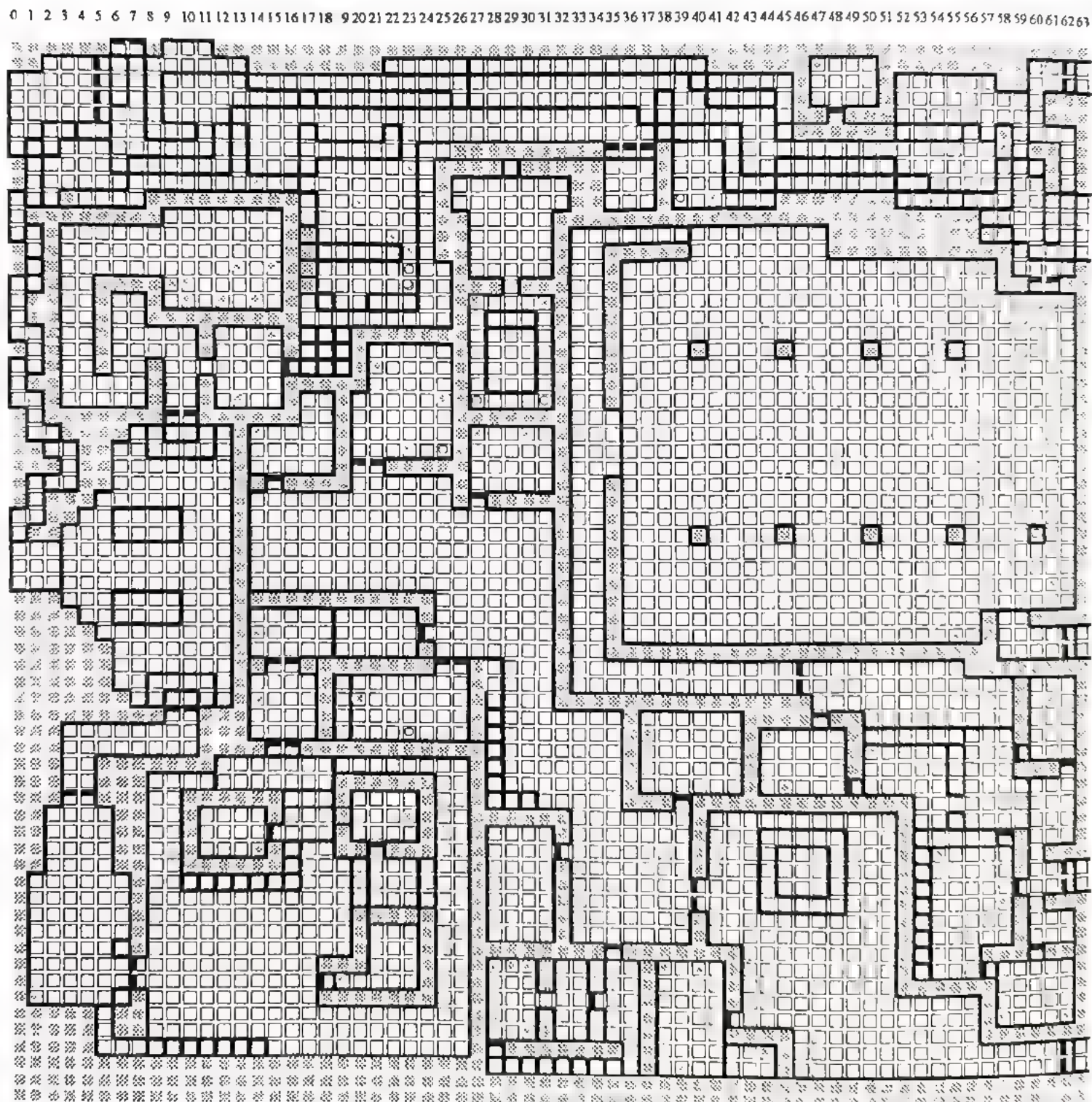
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## Karegh-Konan



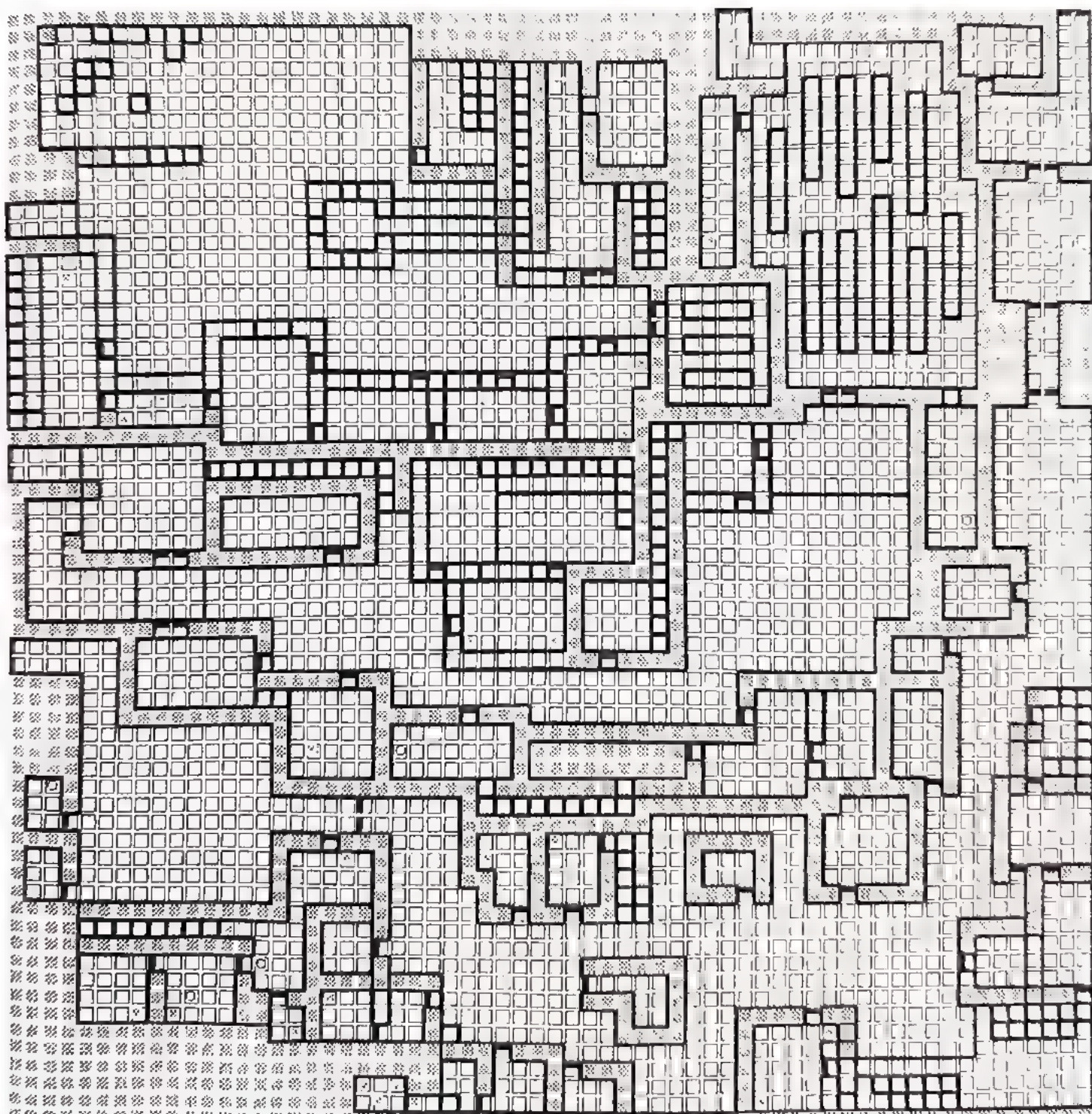




# Lower Karegh-Konan

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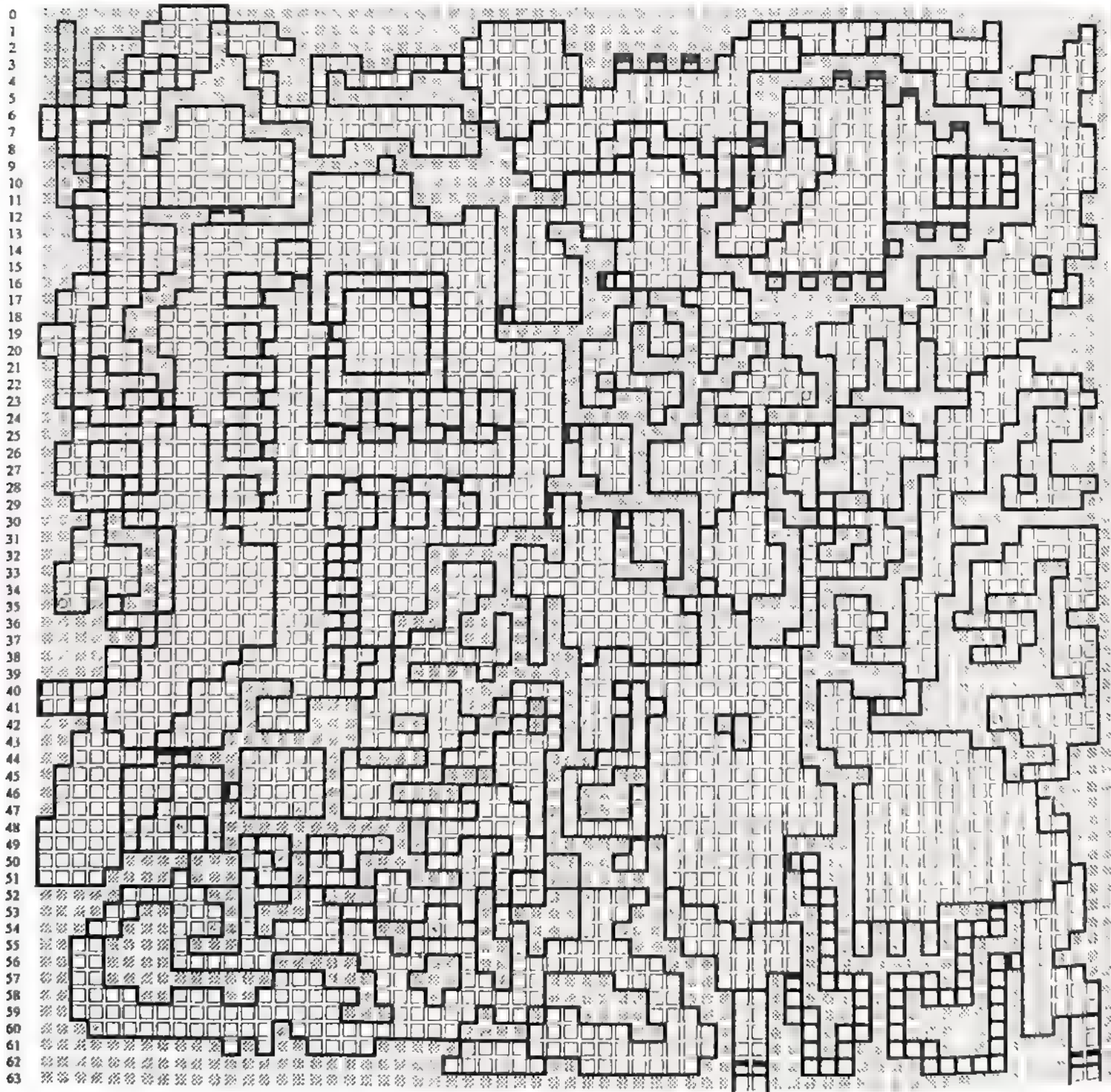






## Founder's Cave

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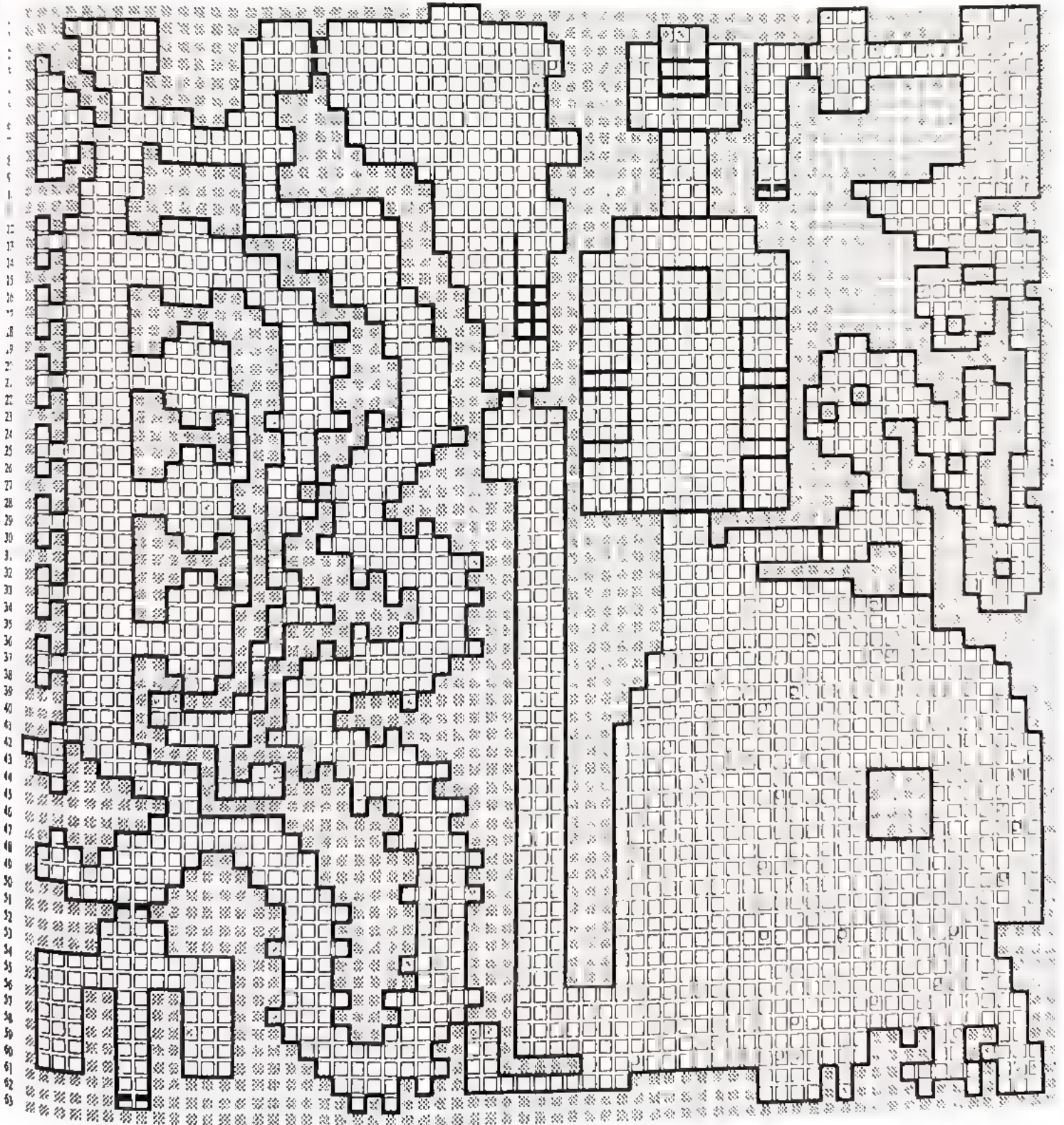






## Lower Caves

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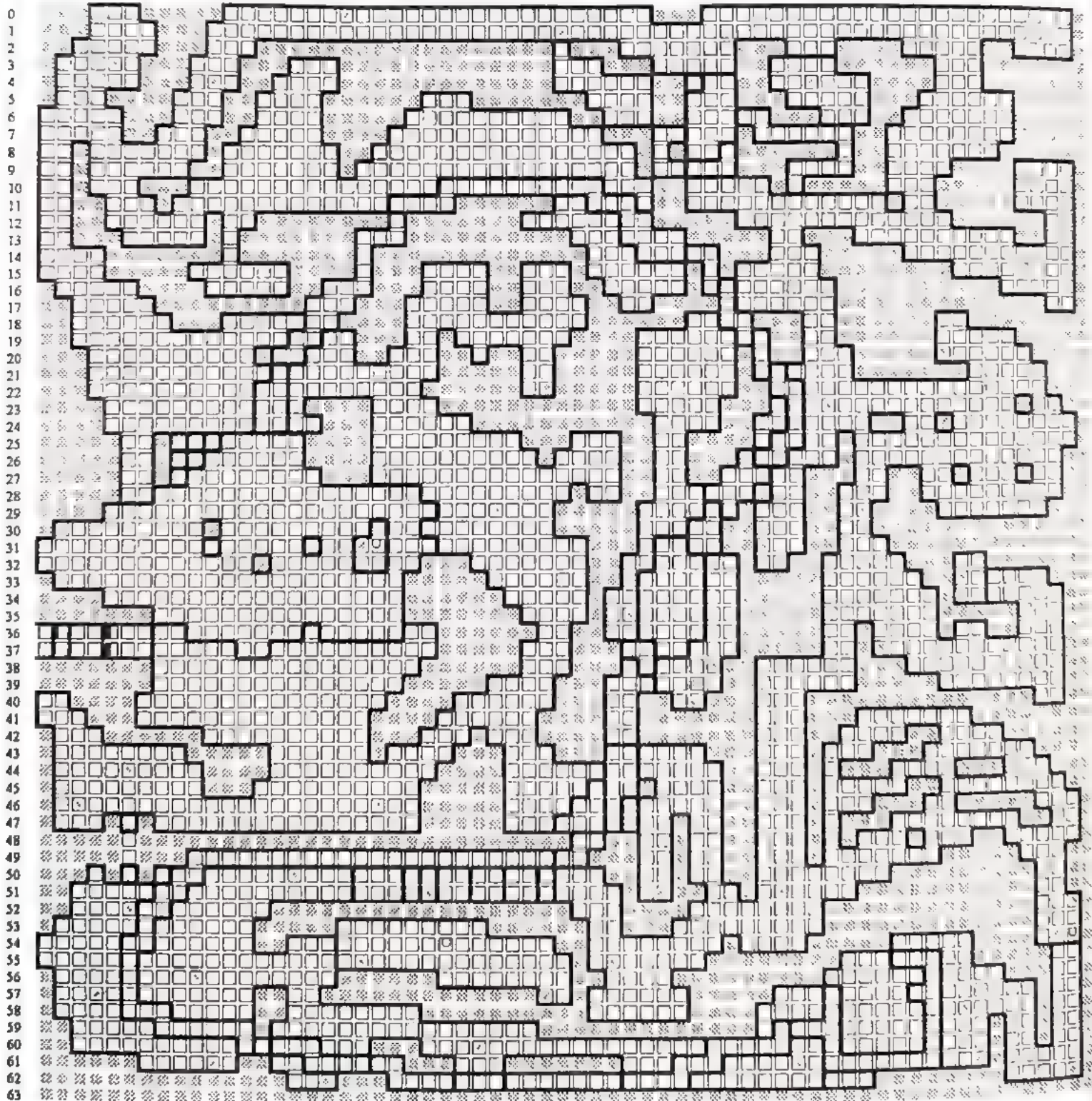






## Upper Caves

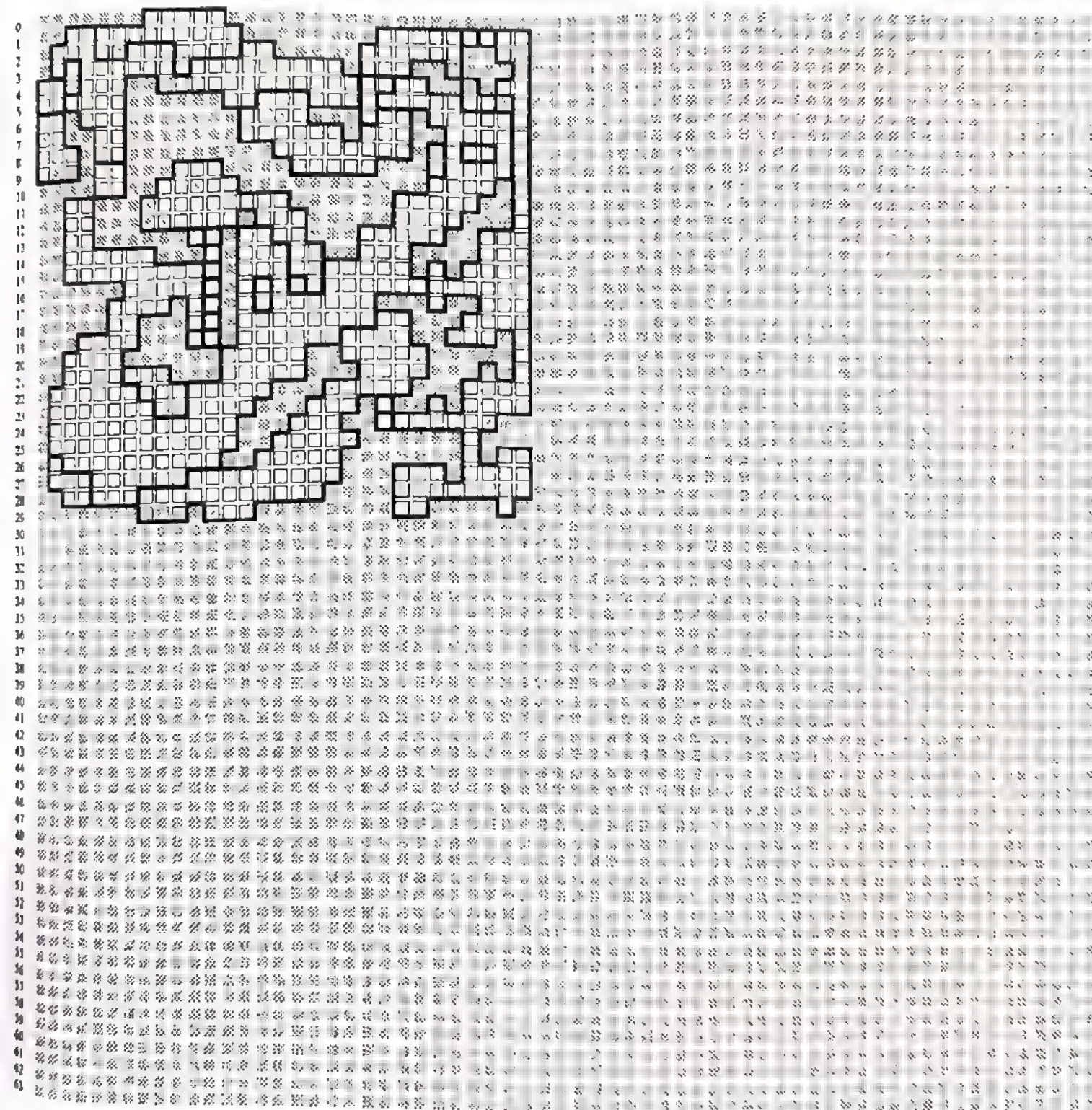
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# The Undercaves

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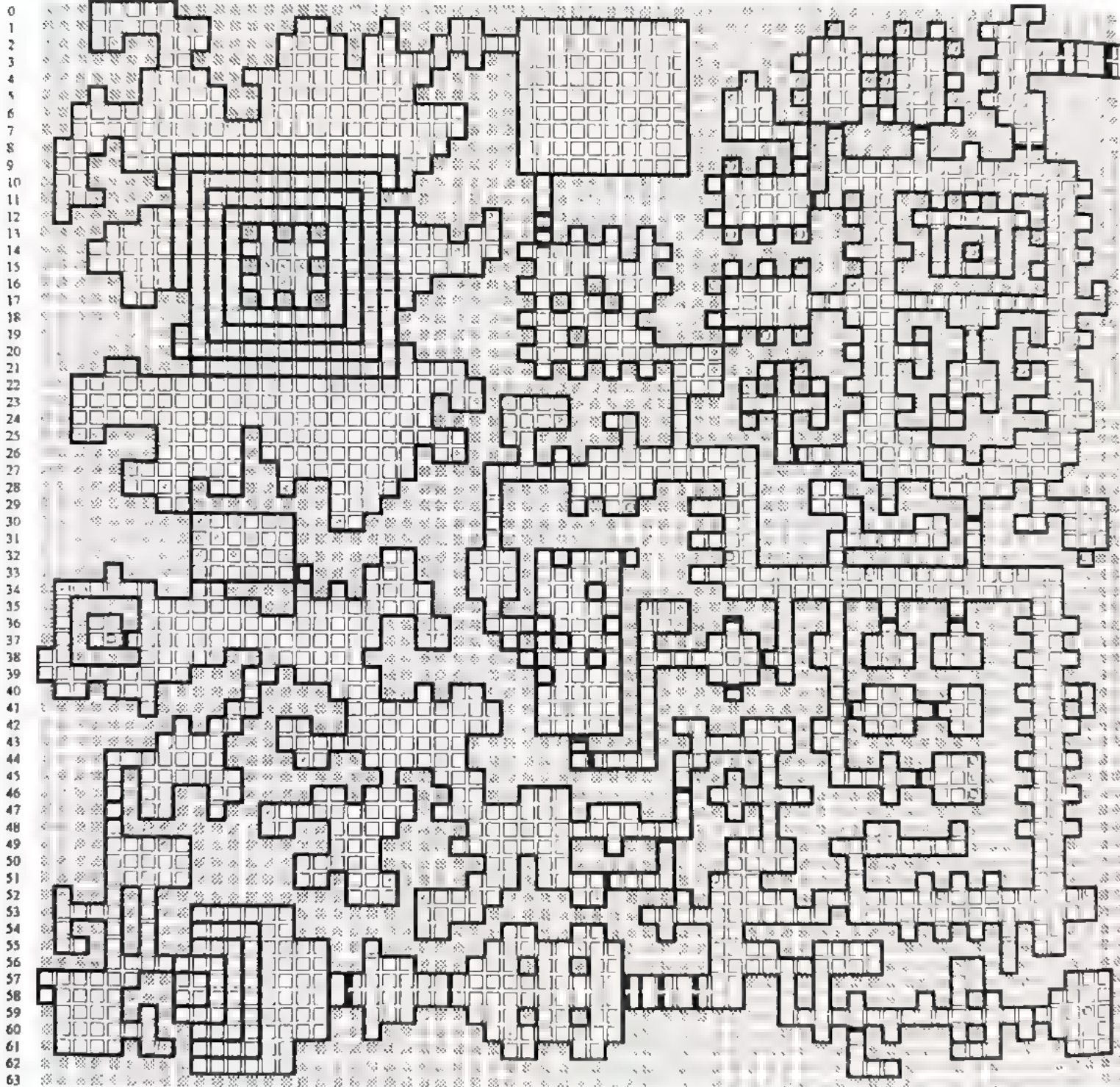






## Catacombs

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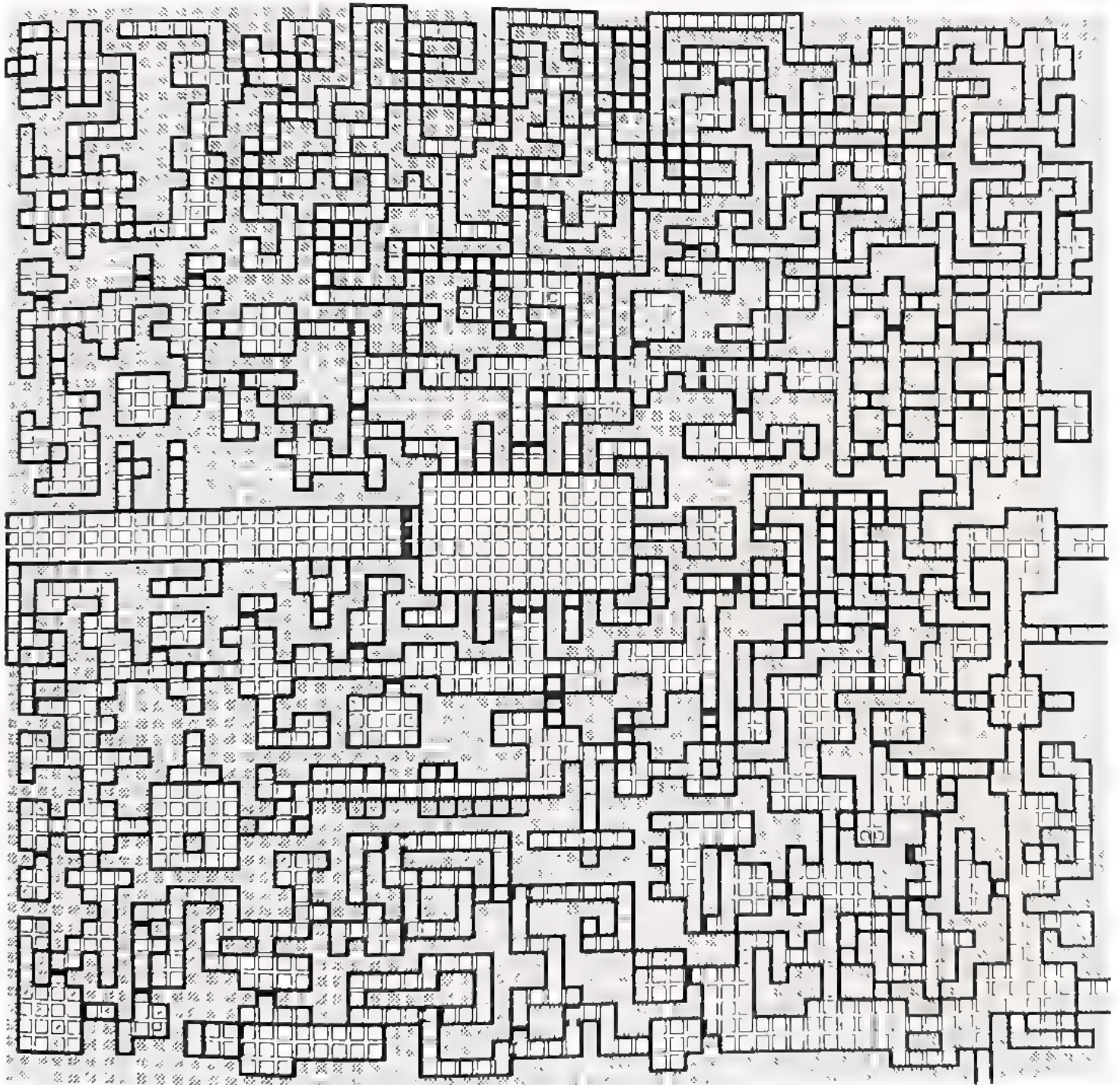




## Sewers

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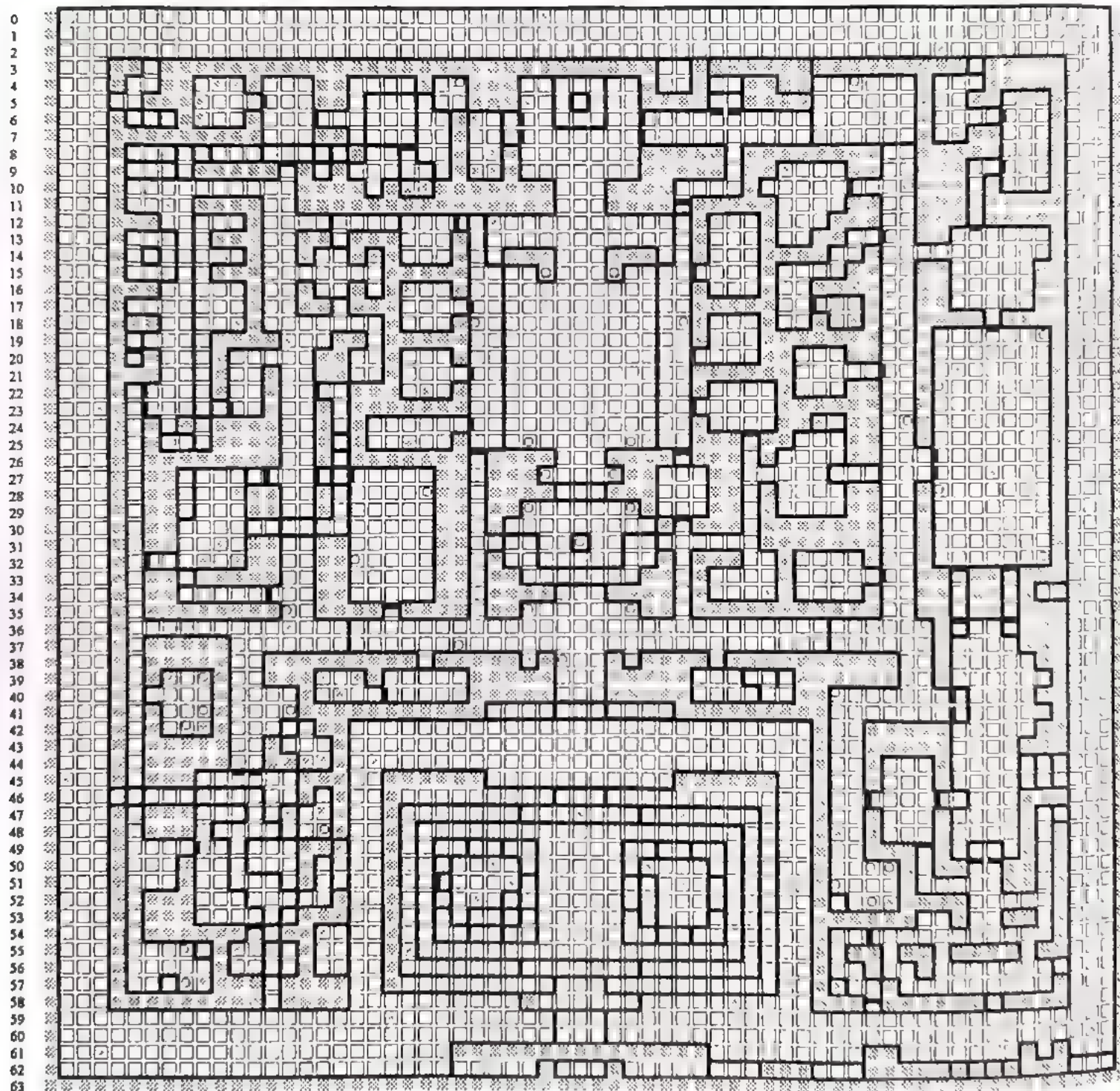
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## Radiant Citadel, Level 1

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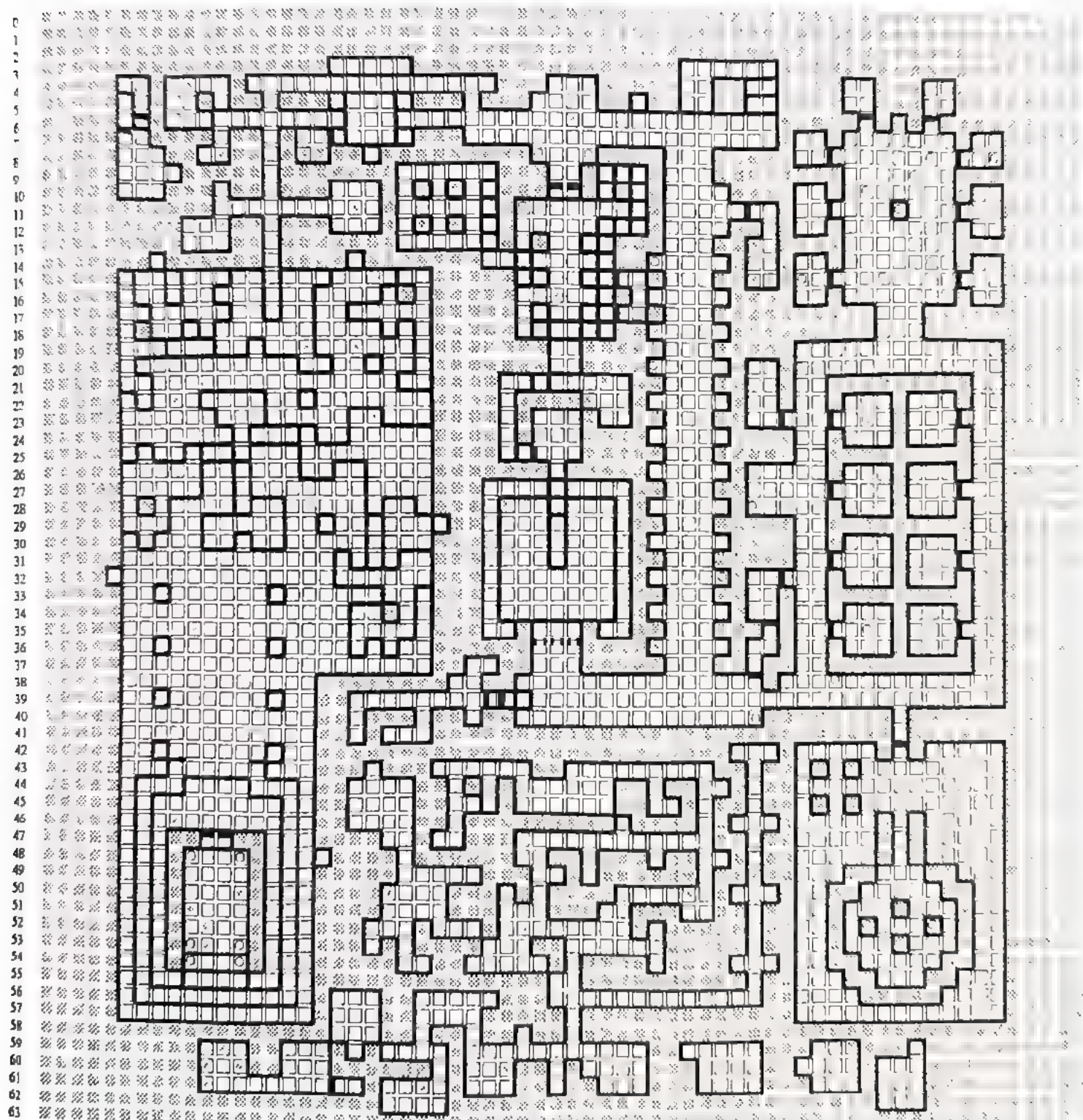






# Radiant Citadel, Level 2

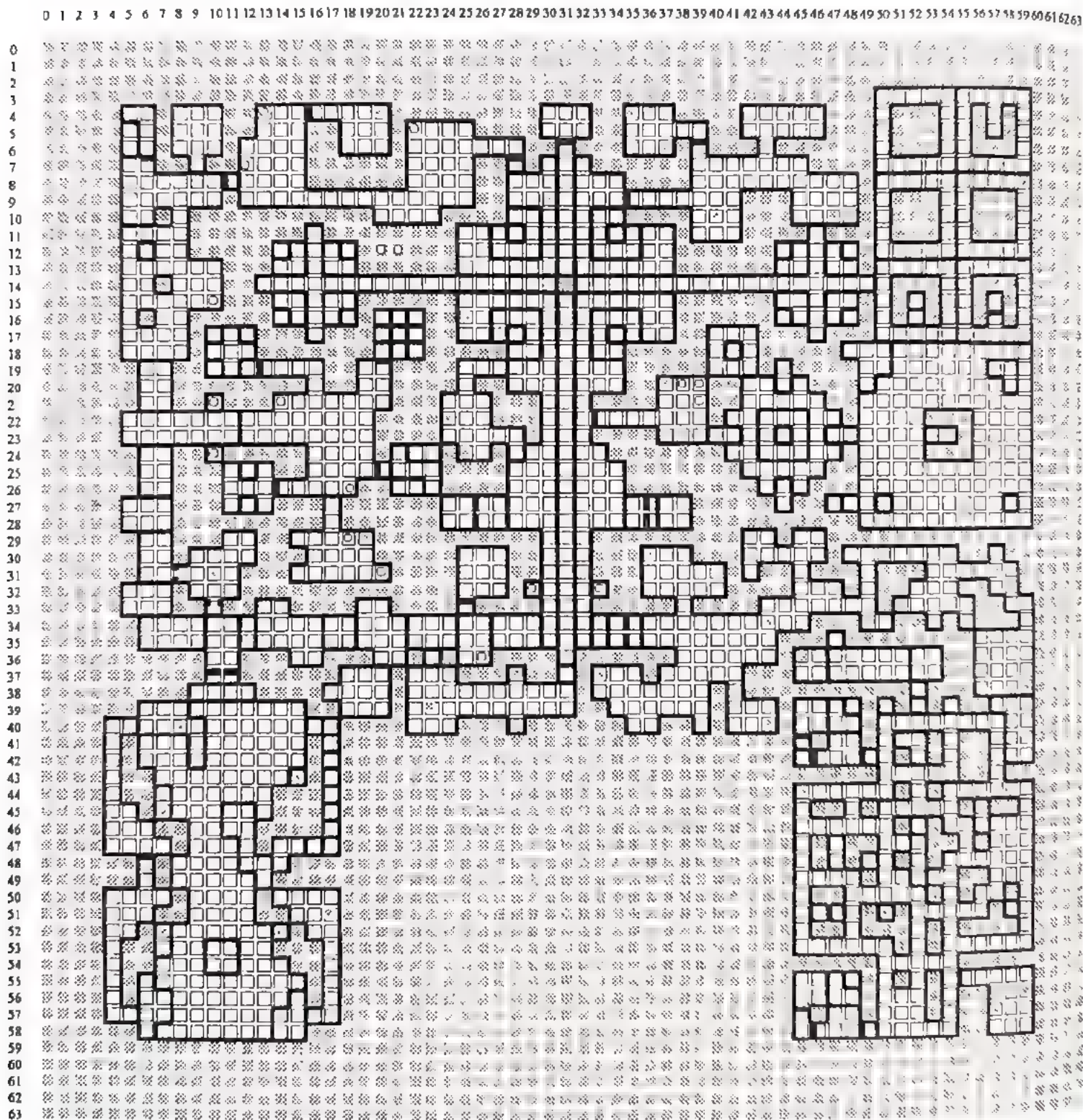
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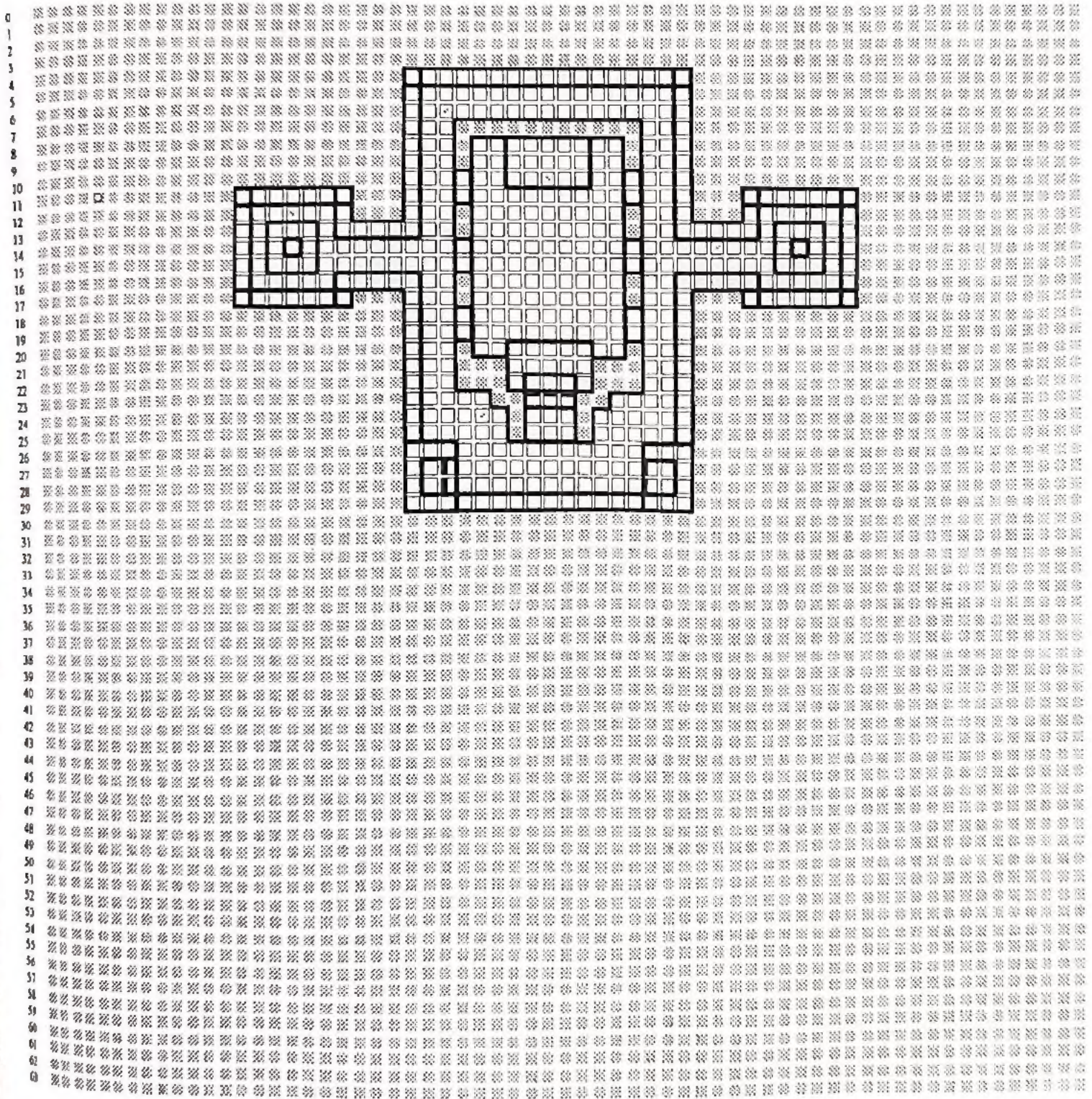
## Radiant Citadel, Level 3





## Radiant Citadel, Level 4

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Peter Olafson is a columnist for *Electronic Entertainment* and *Amiga Game Zone*. His work also appears regularly in *Computer Gaming World* and *Game Pro*. Prior to writing books and articles about the computer and video game industry, he was a daily newspaper journalist for 10 years.



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